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AUTHOR Gallagher, James J.; Clayton, Jenna R.; Heinemeier, Sarah E.

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ABSTRACT

Noting that one of the major educational policy shifts in recent years has been the establishment of state-funded prekindergarten programs, this report details a study examining how five states (Georgia, Illinois, New York, South Carolina, and Texas) managed this educational policy shift, identified the major facilitators and major barriers, and identified strategies useful in achieving this result. Information was obtained through interviews conducted with and documents obtained from a total of 40 individuals representing early childhood, Head Start, child care, the political scene, and others relevant to each state's educational policy. Following an executive summary, the report is presented in four sections. Section 1 discusses change theory and resistance to reform. Section 2 outlines the methodology of the study. Section 3 presents a case study for each state. Section 4 discusses the findings, describing commonalities and differences among states, and delineating recommendations for other states considering prekindergarten education. The findings indicate that all the states had high percentages of change facilitators in the institutional, individual, and political categories. The barriers mentioned most frequently were in the institutional, resources, and economic categories. Common elements across all five states included the importance of political leadership, the goal of reducing early school failure, the importance of making the program part of larger educational reform, cooperation between professional and political leaders, and the increase of mothers in the workforce pressuring decision makers for action. Major state differences included program financing, gradual versus sudden implementation, program administration and the degree of support services provided. (Contains 32 references.) (KB)

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Education for Four-Year-Olds

State Initiatives

James J. Gallagher
Jenna R. Clayton
Sarah E. Hemenway

Technical Report #2

PS 029189

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National Center for Early Development & Learning
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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December 12, 2000

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Executive Summary

ONE OF THE MAJOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY SHIFTS in recent years has been the establishment of state-funded prekindergarten programs in a number of states. Such a move seems to be driven, in part, by:

- evidence that many students are failing in the early grades, particularly children considered "at risk,"
- an increasing number of mothers in the workforce,
- welfare reform policies that require mothers to work and, therefore, find child care, and
- evidence of the importance of early childhood to later development.

The research questions posed in the present study were: How did the states manage this distinctive shift in educational policy to prekindergarten? What were the major facilitators and major barriers to be overcome, and the particular strategies that appeared to be useful in achieving this result? It was noted that such a policy change was being accomplished despite the known difficulty of instituting change in bureaucratic systems and the hidden power of the status quo in resisting change.

Five states were chosen (Georgia, Illinois, New York, South Carolina, and Texas) on the basis of previous surveys that determined that these states were making substantial progress in establishing a prekindergarten program in their state. The objective of this study was to discover the forces at work in each state by conducting structured interviews of knowledgeable people in each of the five states and by examining documents provided by them. The people interviewed represented early childhood, Head Start, child care, the political scene, and others who were seen as relevant to the educational policy in that particular state.

The interviewees were provided the questions they would be asked that essentially inquired into their views and experiences related to facilitators and barriers to the state-funded program for prekindergarten. They were asked to describe how the policy had been established and how it was being implemented.

A category system was designed, based on previous work on policy barriers, which allowed for the coding of the interviews into nine separate categories (Institutional, Individual, Groups, Economic, Political, Geographic, Academic, Media, and Resources). Each category was capable of being either a facilitator or a barrier (see pp. 13–14). Each passage, identified as a facilitator or a barrier, was coded by three judges. Two of the three judges had to agree for the coding to be accepted. The individual case studies and analyses yielded the following results for each of the states.

GEORGIA

In 1992, then Governor Zell Miller decided that prekindergarten was something that Georgia needed and he provided the political leadership to make a program possible. The program began as a pilot and served 750 'at-risk' students. In school year 1995–1996 with the growing income from the newly passed lottery,

a full-day universal program for all four-year-olds (all four-year-olds that wished to participate were entitled to the program) was begun. In 1996 Miller moved the program from the Department of Education into a separate unit, the Office of School Readiness, which reported directly to him.

During the school year 1999–2000, this voluntary state prekindergarten program spent over $220 million and served about 62,500 (63%) students while Head Start served another 10,000 children. Using either program, a total of about 73% of all four-year-old children in Georgia were served. The Georgia program required a teacher-child ratio of 1:10 and a maximum class size of 20 children. The program must operate at least 6 hours per day. The Office of School Readiness contracts with public schools, Head Starts, and private providers to deliver the services.

The prekindergarten program was facilitated because of the commitment of former Governor Zell Miller and the availability of a designated funding source (the lottery) which did not dilute existing funds from other state programs. The establishment of Coordinating Councils, which required the commitment of many agencies, also promoted a smooth start.

A major barrier appeared to be that the program was started so fast that the necessary collaboration and initial concerns of child care and Head Start were overlooked. These concerns now have to be accommodated in the implementation phase.

ILLINOIS

This program began fifteen years ago through the strong initiation of a program of educational reform by the State Board of Education, a variety of influential advocacy groups and by friends in the state legislature. The target population was and remains children identified as "at risk" for academic failure through a screening process, or children for whom English is a second language.

The prekindergarten program has grown from $3 million to $200 million dollars and has units in every county in the state. The state funds full-day and half-day programs; most are half-day programs. The staff-child ratio may not exceed 1:10 with a maximum of 20 children in each classroom. During school year 1999–2000, it served almost 55,000 children (15% of the statewide population of three- and four-year-olds although there are more four-year olds served in the program). Statewide about 22% of four-year-olds are served, with Head Start serving another 40,000 children. Although still not part of the regular school budget (it operated as a grant program) it seemed to be well established. Localities must receive funds through the public schools, but they may subcontract with Head Start and child care centers to provide the services.

The prekindergarten programs appeared to be facilitated by gradual implementation and strong public support. There were many advocacy voices for this program from a variety of groups in the private and professional sectors of Illinois. From the very beginning of the program, there was an emphasis on program quality that reassured the public that their money was being well spent.

Major barriers appeared to be a limited amount of collaboration between the schools and other agencies in many districts. Lack of space, transportation, and qualified teachers remained a problem although, ironically, such deficits encouraged collaboration.

NEW YORK

New York has had an Experimental prekindergarten program in place for 35 years and this program laid the groundwork for the Universal Prekindergarten program (UPK). UPK started in 1997 with a year of planning. The first year of implementation, 1998–1999, the program served 68 low-income

districts with all children within these districts being eligible to attend this half-day program.

Universal Prekindergarten had a budget of $100 million for school year 1999–2000 and served 99 districts including the five largest districts in the state. Almost 35,000 (13% of the four-year-olds in the state) children were served in 1999–2000 with priority given to economically disadvantaged children within these districts. A budget of $225 million was approved for this half-day program in 2000–2001.

The money is awarded to the public schools, which must then subcontract at least 10% of their funds to outside agencies. Public schools, Head Start and private providers may offer programs. There has been a strong emphasis on quality with the requirement that all lead teachers be certified by school year 2001–2002. There is no minimum class size, but the maximum is 20.

A major facilitator for the Universal Prekindergarten program was the legislation that **mandated** at least 10% of prekindergarten funds be set aside for other agencies to participate. A driving force for the new program (buried in a large education reform package—the LADDER proposal) was Speaker of the Assembly, Sheldon Silver, with the support of many advocacy and professional groups. A strong curriculum was made available to local districts as well as quality controls that were designed to enhance child development.

Although promoted as a universal program, open to all, it has a five-year phase-in and there remain concerns about whether there will be enough money appropriated for total implementation. Some schools remain doubtful of the state's intent and their concerns have been magnified by the legislature's penchant for late budgets, often not passed until the summer. Lack of trained personnel, transportation and half-day programs are problems that require other support funds.

SOUTH CAROLINA

The strong leadership of former Governor Richard Riley facilitated the prekindergarten program in South Carolina. He began the program as part of a package of education reform. The fact that many students in South Carolina were performing poorly on standardized tests and that prekindergarten received strong support from minority groups were seen as strong catalysts for the program.

The prekindergarten program began as part of the Education Improvement Act in 1984 with the passage of an additional one-cent sales tax. The program served 'at-risk' four-year-olds who are defined as "children with potential academic deficiencies or children for whom English is a second language." A school district may subcontract with outside agencies to provide prekindergarten services. Only certified teachers may teach in the program regardless of what setting is being used. The program requires two and a half hours per day—five days per week. Half-day programs are not practical in some localities so they often use an assortment of funding sources and collaboration to provide full-day programs.

Every school district was required to have at least one program, and about 15,400 children were served in the 1999–2000 school year. This was about 30% of the four-year-olds in the state. At the same time the state appropriated $23.6 million for this program with the participating localities spending additional amounts.

The program has faced political problems, depending upon which party was in power, in addition to financial costs and lack of resources, such as trained personnel. There were also moral issues raised by conservative voices, who carry considerable weight in South Carolina. They often questioned whether such early childhood programs were undermining the family by encouraging women to work outside the home.

TEXAS

The prekindergarten program in Texas began in the fall of 1985. It served 'at-risk' (children unable to speak or understand English, educationally disadvantaged, or homeless) children in almost every locality of Texas. If a school district identified at least 15 eligible four-year-olds, it must offer a prekindergarten program. The program had gradually grown over the years to a $171.9 million program, serving 142,000 children or about 22% of the four-year-olds in the state.

Currently the state funds half-day programs, but an additional $200 million was provided by the state legislature in 1999 to transform these programs into full-day programs. This money is to be used during the 1999–2001 school years. The Texas Education Agency administers the prekindergarten program and local school districts receive the funds. They may subcontract with community agencies for prekindergarten services. There are voluntary curriculum standards but a certified teacher must be in each classroom. Because prekindergarten was removed from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (a means used by the Texas Education Agency for determining accountability/ requirement) there is neither a state-approved teacher child ratio nor a maximum class size.

The prekindergarten program was facilitated because the program was a part of a larger educational reform movement inspired by a citizen's commission headed by Ross Perot. The impetus for the program was the large number of children failing in the early grades. A new initiative pushed by Governor Bush, 'every child reading on grade level by the third grade,' has increased interest and support for the prekindergarten program.

The major barriers are lack of facilities and personnel and also a lack of administrative support as evidenced by a one-person Department of Early Childhood Education and a lack of regular early childhood education staff in the important Regional Resources Centers. There is also a question about how extensive the collaboration is between community agencies and the education programs.

FACILITATORS & BARRIERS

Using the category system employed in this study, all of the states seemed to have high percentages of facilitators in the **institutional, individual,** and **political** areas. The wide variety of changes in the systems of education and child care resulted in a high percentage of responses in the **institutional** category. Organizational shifts for administrative purposes, establishing local coordinating councils, creating new personnel preparation programs, and so on, all fell in this category. The **individual** category was also high in most states, which reflected the powerful influence of key persons in the state, both political and professional leaders, necessary to move the program along. **Political** responses reflected the important role played by the political process in bringing about these policy changes.

The barriers that were mentioned most frequently by most states fell into the **institutional, resources,** and **economic** categories. The many responses in the **institutional** category reflected the continued need to establish collaboration between agencies and the lack of data systems, communication networks, and other support system features that were needed for a complete prekindergarten program.

The lack of **resources** to properly run a prekindergarten program was felt by all of the states and focused on space, transportation, and personnel needs. Even when the program was limited to 'at-risk' students there were major shortages to meet all of these needs. As states move to a universal

program such needs will multiply, again requiring a consistent strategy as to how to meet these needs on a continuing basis.

Economics was the third category that received many comments. The major concern was how to pay for this program. At the universal level it is the equivalent of adding another year to the budget of the public schools, which is no small matter. Aside from Georgia's use of the lottery, there were few insights as to how the program was going to be financed aside from gradually increasing this budget year-by-year. A phase-in strategy is almost sure to be used by most states to allow for gradual increases in the budget to pay the bill for this new prekindergarten program.

COMMON THEMES

The investigators found several common elements across all five states. These included, (1) the importance of political leadership, (2) the goal of trying to reduce school failure in the early grades, (3) the importance of making this program a piece of a larger educational reform package, (4) the cooperation between professional and political leaders, and (5) the increase of mothers in the workforce putting pressure on decision makers for some type of action.

Major differences between the states were found in: (1) the manner of financing the program, (2) gradual versus sudden implementation, (3) how the program was administered and the degree of support services provided to back-up the program.

LESSONS LEARNED

Among the suggestions provided by the investigators to other states that might be thinking about state action for prekindergartens or expanding existing programs, the five most important were:

- link the program with other educational reform packages,
- target children who are not developing in ways that could make likely their successful entry to school ('at-risk' children),
- seek political leadership and support,
- establish a funding source, if possible, one that does not take away from other state services, and
- encourage collaboration among the many early childhood stakeholders within the state.

Other suggestions were: develop strategies for transportation, build a data system to collect needed information, and stress program quality such as using certified personnel and well developed curriculum. ■

Introduction

ONE OF THE MAJOR SHIFTS IN AMERICAN SOCIETY in the last half of the twentieth century has been the increasing number of women and mothers in the workforce. Prior to World War II only about 10% of women were in the workforce. The figure is now 65% of women with children under the age of five are in the workforce (MLR: The Editor's Desk, 1999). The policy issue is, who will care for the young child?

As long as young children were perceived as needing only someone to provide loving care and a safe and protected environment in which to spend their early years, the emphasis was on child care with relatively untrained personnel (Gallagher, Rooney & Campbell, 1999). It has become clear, however, that many children are entering the public school systems quite unprepared. Additionally, there have been a series of research studies stressing the importance of intervention in the early years (Ramey & Ramey, 1998). Recently, there have also been reports of early brain development that stress the role of experience in growing the brain's network of associations (Jensen, 1998).

One of the first attempts to prepare 'at-risk' students for school was Head Start, a major pillar of President Lyndon Johnson's *War on Poverty.* This attempt to help young children in poverty (90% of the 'at-risk' children come from families below the poverty line) become prepared for school started with great optimism and enthusiasm. Head Start improved social competence and motivation. The program did not, however, significantly improve IQ scores or achievement (Zigler & Styfco, 1994). It seems clear that Head Start was not the total answer to school readiness.

While the importance of early experience was being spread by the popular media, results from various reviews of child care programs were discouraging. *The Child Care, Cost, and Quality Study* (Helburn, 1995) reviewed 400 child care sites and reported mediocre or worse child care programs in many of these settings. Furthermore, many observers felt that the inherent weaknesses of the child care programs in terms of low teacher salaries, low level of personnel preparation, and high parental costs (Morgan, 1995) made it difficult to see how these obstacles could be easily overcome (Kagan & Cohen, 1997; Gormley, 1997).

With so many children growing up in poverty in one-parent families, or in families with limited English proficiency, there was a general feeling that a different setting was needed that had the specific goal of preparing children 'at risk for school failure' for a successful school experience. Zigler, Finn-Stevenson, & Marsland (1995) have called for different goals in programs for young children. Prekindergarten programs have been seen as one policy answer to the problems of young children's development. Forty two states now have some form of state-funded prekindergarten programs (Schulman, Blank, & Ewen, 1999) but many of these programs are relatively small and underfunded. Is it possible that such programs would be expanded and extended in the near future? A recent judge's ruling in North Carolina found that the state had a consti-

tutional obligation to provide 'at-risk' children with early education beginning at age four. Such a ruling, if unchallenged, would be another force leading to more prekindergarten programs (Public School Forum's Friday Report, 2000).

CHANGE THEORY

What do we know about change and how it can be accomplished in this policy arena? Prekindergarten represents such a **sea change** in American education that the nature of change itself needs to be considered. Table 1 presents the eight basic lessons of a new paradigm change proposed by Fullan (1993). Some of these lessons seem particularly relevant to the present study. We are particularly interested in Lesson 2, **Change is a journey, not a blueprint** (change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement, and sometimes perverse); Lesson 6, **Neither centralization nor decentralization works** (both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' strategies are necessary); and Lesson 7, **Connection with the wider environment is critical for success** (the best organizations learn from external sources as well as internal). We believe that these three rules have direct applicability to the current proposed policy change towards prekindergartens. We will try to identify elements in our data that address these rules.

Since it is impossible to predict, in advance, all of the forces that might come into play in a major change (such as the prekindergarten shift), detailed planning or blueprinting in advance is not possible (Lesson 2). As Fullan says:

> *Under conditions of uncertainty, learning, anxiety, difficulties and fear of the unknown is intrinsic to all change processes, especially at the early stages. One can see why a risk-taking mentality and climate are so critical (p. 25).*

In short, there is a requirement for flexibility in considering policy change because of the dynamic nature of the multiple forces that have to be considered.

Table 1. The Eight Basic Lessons of the New Paradigm Change

Lesson One:	You can't mandate what matters.
Lesson Two:	Change is a journey not a blueprint (change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement, and sometimes perverse).
Lesson Three:	Problems are our friends.
Lesson Four:	Vision and strategic planning come later.
Lesson Five:	Individualism and collectivism must have equal power.
Lesson Six:	Neither centralization nor decentralization works (both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary).
Lesson Seven:	Connection with the wider environment is critical for success (the best organizations learn externally as well as internally).
Lesson Eight:	Every person is a change agent.

Source: Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces.* New York: The Palmer Press.

If one chooses either the centralized ('top-down') or the decentralized ('bottom-up') approach to creating change exclusively, then one has a serious imbalance (Lesson 6). Centralization errs on the side of over-control from above, while decentralization errs towards diffuse efforts devoid of authority. Each approach needs the other in order to be successful. In states that have made considerable progress in changing policies for young children, this means that one would expect to find some central power sources such as an agency head or a key political figure who were directing this move (centralized). On the other hand, one would expect many other diverse forces more directly affected by the decision to adopt prekindergarten programs, such as parent groups and teachers and child care programs, whose support can provide needed public sanction and approval for these ideas (decentralized).

'Connection with the wider environment' is necessary because so many diverse forces are at work in the society, all of which will be affected by this move (Lesson 7). An element of dynamic complexity that translates into continued interactions in the environment. Forces such as political rivals, Head Start, parent complaints, lack of space, financial support, or a dozen different forces can be counted upon to resist changing the landscape as this change process continues. Potential objectors to the policy shift must be brought into the system or their influence neutralized in some fashion.

RESISTANCE TO REFORM

Many past efforts at educational reform have come to naught, focusing on the difficulties in changing large organizations or institutions (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Schein, 1996). There appears to be good reason for respecting the power of the status quo. Gersick (1991) describes a **deep structure,** a set of basic activity patterns that evolve to maintain a system's existence. These existing policies or regulations, the 'rules of the game,' are referred to by those resistant to policy change: 'This is the way we have always done things.' When this defense of the status quo's 'rules of the game' is combined with the fact that change tends to reallocate power and authority (Sarason, 1996), often to the dismay of those currently holding such power and authority, it is easy to see that any policy change has a strong uphill climb to reach its goal.

The reaction of organizations to the threat of change has been likened to the reaction of the human body to infection. White corpuscles hasten to the intruding infection and seal it off to keep the infection from spreading to the rest of the body. Soon a scab forms over the wound and drops off leaving the body the same as it was. An analogy to the fate of various educational reform efforts is not hard to draw.

OPPOSITION TO FOUR-YEAR-OLDS IN EDUCATION

In addition to the natural resistance to **change,** there can be direct opposition to the prekindergarten policy. Some opposition sources may question the utility of the cost involved, others may question the basic philosophy of the program, and still others may question the positive claims for the program itself.

Those questioning the cost of the new program represent a more generic objection to any new costly program. The expenditure of more money for public purposes means, in all likelihood, more taxes for the citizens, or less attention to other priorities on which the objectors might care to spend these scarce resources. The amount of the cost may be more important to these objectors than philosophical disagreements. For example, 'If you need to find a 'safe place' for the child while the mother works, why make it a BMW-type program,

why not a Chevrolet-type of program?' represents a common theme (Scarr, 1998).

There are several possible responses to this objection. Evidence can be offered that there are long-range benefits to a well-organized intervention program that would include less school failure or even less crime in later years, a major savings in long-term costs. The work of Weikert and others, for example, have indicated that the state can receive several dollars back in benefits for every dollar spent now on quality child programs (Schweinhart, Barnes, & Weikert, 1993).

The second level of objection is more difficult to deal with because it represents a moral position. The objection is as follows: 'The family is the cornerstone of morality and character building in our society. By taking young children out of the family and placing them in some preschool program, you are further undermining the family unit during a time when children most need the nurturance of a loving mother. No child care worker or teacher can replace that love.'

Further, by allowing the child to be cared for by 'government' you open him/her to suspect outside influences. 'How do you know what the child is being taught during these tender years?' These objections are made with great intensity and sincerity by some provide a continued predictable opposition to the prekindergarten in education program (Olsen, 1999). Although the numbers of these objectors are relatively small, their energy and commitment are large, and provide a predictable barrier in any state.

There have been a number of critics who believe that the claims of benefits from prekindergarten programs have been overstated and lack convincing evidence (Scarr, 1998). While they admit that some exemplary programs with an abundance of resources have shown a difference in the children's development, they point out that other programs with lesser resources have not shown to make such a difference. Olsen (1999) has summarized the negative position as follows:

> *"No empirical evidence supports the claim that universal preschool will reduce the number of children who will perform poorly in school, become teenage parents, commit criminal acts, or depend on welfare. Although some projects have had meaningful short-term effects on disadvantaged children's cognitive ability, grade retention and special education placement, those benefits are short lived." (p. 17)*

While it is true that there have been only modest changes in IQ scores in children in these special preschool programs there is some consistency in the finding that there is less later school failure, which is a major goal of such programs (Ramey & Ramey, 1998). As Susan Gray once pointed out, it is foolish to think of early childhood programs as providing an inoculation against all of the ills of society that the child may meet in later years (Gray, Ramsey, & Klaus, 1982).

Methodology

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The basic question we are posing is, 'How do states change their policies about four-year-olds in education?' What are the critical factors facilitating and inhibiting such a change? We identified five states that made substantial progress in changing their policies to include prekindergarten and will attempt to describe and explain how they were able to accomplish this goal. Our data include information gleaned from interviewing key personnel within each state and from reviewing state documents.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this paper, we used the following definitions:

Preschool	Programs that serve children under school age
Prekindergarten	Programs that serve only three-year-olds and/or four-year-olds under educational administration.

SELECTION OF STATES

One of the primary sources of information used to select the final states came from a major report from the Families and Work Institute entitled, *Prekindergarten Programs Funded by the States* (Mitchell, Ripple, & Chanan, 1998). This study provided the history of the preschool programs for each state, the number of children served, the population served, the providers, and program standards.

From this base we identified 8 to 10 states as candidates for this study using the criteria on percentage of four-year-olds being served and the amount of funds committed. From this group the final five states (Georgia, Illinois, New York, South Carolina, & Texas) were chosen on the basis of diversity in size, region of the country, and willingness to participate in the study. No state refused to participate in the study.

INTERVIEWEES

Our goal was to interview seven or eight key people in each state who had direct knowledge of the prekindergarten program but who might see the program from a variety of perspectives. In each state we were able to interview the state director of the prekindergarten program. We also interviewed a representative from the Head Start program in the state, someone from the political arena, and someone who had experience in child advocacy. The remainder of the interviewees were chosen based upon their close association with the program, and having been nominated by other professionals in the state. In some states a representative from higher education was involved, in others someone from the child care profession, and so on.

PROCEDURE

A standard letter was sent out to the prospective interviewee explaining the purpose of the study and asking for about forty-five minutes of their time to participate in a telephone interview. If they accepted, an appointment time and date were set, and they were sent a set of key questions that would be used in the interview so that they would have a chance to reflect on their answers in advance and not have to respond in the spur of the moment. A list of these questions are in Table 2. Of the forty-five interviewees, we were turned down by one and four others did not respond to our inquiries. Sometimes a political figure was immersed in the current legislative session, another time a person was leaving her position to go to another state. No one refused participation because of a stated concern about the project or its outcome.

Each interview was tape recorded, except in two instances when the interviewee specifically requested that notes be taken instead. The taped interviews were transcribed and the scripts were used for further analysis. In the two interviews not taped, the notes were reviewed in similar fashion.

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Each of the interview scripts was read by three judges who underlined passages in different colors that represented the categories of **facilitators** and **barriers**. Facilitator passages were those that enhanced the enactment and development of an educational program for four-year-olds. The initiatives of legislation, the work of advocates, or the development of a personnel preparation program would all fall under the general area of facilitation. Examples of barriers would be opposition by various groups, lack of needed resources, and lack of needed infrastructure.

A category system for coding the interview material was developed from an earlier system derived for explaining barriers to policy initiation or support (Haskins & Gallagher, 1981; Gallagher & Clifford, 2000). To the original categories of **institutional, psychological (individual), sociological (groups), economic, political,** and **geographic,** three other categories were added. These were **academic evidence** (data presented either for or against the policy), **media** (evidence or opinions in the popular media which supported or opposed the policy), and **resources** (the availability or unavailability of personnel, facilities, and so on). These were added based on our background knowledge of this particular issue.

The facilitators for each of these nine categories were considered to be the opposite or mirror image of the barriers. A facilitator under economics, for example, was the availability of funds to carry out the policy. A barrier under this economics category would be the unavailability of such funds, or unwillingness to spend such funds. Brief descriptions of the coding statements for facilitators are presented in Table 3. Sample responses coded under each category are provided in Table 3.

On occasion, a statement seemed to overlap the facilitator categories such as "The governor was extremely instrumental in getting the legislature to pass the bill". Such a statement would be coded (B) for the governor as an Individual and (E) for Political to represent the political process of passing the bill. Each statement was coded according to all applicable categories.

Table 4 shows the categories that represent the barriers coded for the study. Sample responses are given as examples for each of the coding. Barriers were those forces that were perceived by the interviewees to be standing in the path, or continued to stand in the path of the prekindergarten program. Lack of funds, political opposition, inability to collaborate, and inadequate space all represent common barriers. As was true with the

Table 2. Four-year-olds in Education—Proposed Questions

1. Has your state's role in preschool education changed in the past 5 years? How?

2. A number of institutions and organizations (e.g., child care, public schools, higher education, Head Start, etc.) can play a role in the assumptions of preschool programs by education or special state agencies. In your judgment, were these organizations helpful or resistant to the change?

3. Sometimes an event (media, brain research, associations, parents [working mothers]) or a single individual, by force of charisma or the position occupied, can play a significant role in a major change like this. Was there such a person(s) or event in your state?

4. Were there existing policies, rules, people, or regulations that were facilitators or barriers that had to be overcome? Which? Explain.

5. Every state has a variety of cultural subgroups (e.g., ethnic, income, special needs, and so on) that play a role in policy development. Did these groups impact on this change? Were they helpful or resistant?

6. One certain consequence of the state taking responsibility for four-year-olds is that there will be an increase in the state budget. What role did this play in your state? Where does the money come from?

7. Most states have a rural-urban split on policy matters. Did this split play an important role in your state's decision to offer a program for four-year-olds? How?

8. What are the current goals of the your state program? (e.g., Preparation for entrance to school? Development of positive social skills?) Is the eventual goal to achieve universal services for four-year-olds through this program?

9. Have decisions been made regarding:

   a. preparation (e.g., staff qualifications, preservice & inservice training, a career ladder?)

   b. Who will be responsible for the day-to-day operation (principals, child care coordinators, and so on)?

   c. Is there an established form of communication (between sites, with research organizations, and so on)?

   d. Are there demonstration or exemplary programs in your state?

   e. Is there some organized technical assistance available to local service providers?

   f. Is there some form of accountability (e.g., raised test scores = increase funding)?

   g. Does your state have a state-wide data collection system (e.g., number of children at home, number of children served, special needs being served in the same proportion as their state proportion, curriculum used, and so on)?

   h. Does your state have some form of comprehensive planning (collaboration)?

Table 3. Categories for Facilitators

CODE DESCRIPTION

A **Institutional.** Policies or agencies that stress the change or additions to structures or institutions related to early childhood. Institutional facilitators are present within the infrastructure of the educational system. Prekindergarten policy is implemented from institutional sources.

- *A new Office of Early Childhood has been established*
- *A Planning Council has been established to set goals and standards for prekindergarten programs*

B **Individual.** Individuals who have come forward as a significant factor advocating or supporting the four-year-old policy. These individuals can operate as representatives of other agencies but have been specifically identified by interview participants as critical in the acceptance and implementation of prekindergarten policy.

- *The new chair of the appropriation committee, Sam Dash, is an enthusiastic supporter of the prekindergarten program.*
- *Bill Gates has promised all of the royalties from the new Windows program will be donated to the prekindergarten program.*

C **Groups.** These statements or actions would be made representing an established group of people. Interview participants identified the group, rather than an individual, as lending support to prekindergarten policy and aiding in the process of policy acceptance and implementation. The group, therefore, is responsible for policy facilitation.

- *The Child Care Association has gone on record supporting the prekindergarten program.*

D **Economic.** Statements or actions that increase the likelihood that additional economic resources will be directed to early childhood programs. The presence of funding, rather than an individual or group advocating for funding, is identified.

- *The new sales tax will make it much easier to fund the expenses of the prekindergarten program.*
- *The prekindergarten program was incorporated into the general budget.*

E **Political.** Statements or actions by political figures or political parties that forward the cause of prekindergarten programs. Individuals are often important components of political facilitators, but participants have here identified the support of a larger group rather than an individual as critical to prekindergarten policy success.

- *The prekindergarten bill has been enthusiastically supported by the State Senate.*
- The Governor announced his intention to fight for a universal prekindergarten program.

F **Geographic.** States have varying needs based upon geography. Interview participants identified varying geographic populations within the state as promoting or advocating prekindergarten policy, because it serves specific needs within that region.

- *The communities in the mountains seem very supportive.*
- *The eastern part of the state wants to expand its program.*

G **Academic.** Participants identify support that is based upon research findings. The various opinions of 'experts' and educational researchers fit this category. The academic evidence both supports prekindergarten as well as identifies best practices for prekindergarten curriculum, design and implementation.

- *Research has shown the positive effect of early childhood education on later educational growth.*
- *Legislators cited recent brain research reports in their support of the prekindergarten program.*

H **Media.** Interview participants specifically identify a media source that has facilitated the implementation of prekindergarten. This might include support by members of the media or TV programs and articles that have been supportive of the prekindergarten program.

- *Several newspaper editorials have come out in favor of this bill.*
- *Media attention raised awareness of the benefits of prekindergarten.*

I **Resources.** The availability of personnel, space, etc., which would ease the implementation of a prekindergarten program. Participants identify the availability of teachers, usable space, and educational materials, as facilitating introduction of prekindergarten at various sites.

- *It was the availability of space that enabled us to go from half-day to full-day programs.*
- *The abundance of early childhood certified teachers allow the program to get a quick start.*

Table 4. Categories for Barriers

CODE DESCRIPTION

Z **Institutional.** These barriers represent various institutions or administrative structures that hinder the development of the prekindergarten program. These barriers are present within the infrastructure of the educational system and represent resistance to state funded prekindergarten from within the state's educational system.

- *An agency complains that they were not named the lead agency in this effort.*
- *Head Start objected to collaborating with the Office of Early Childhood Education.*

Y **Individual.** These are barriers that are individual in nature and represent a person who acts to deter the acceptance and implementation of prekindergarten. Reasons for this individual to act are varied, but can include moral positions or resistance to the essence of the program.

- Minister Jenkins believed this program would undermine family values.
- Superintendent Smith did not feel prekindergarten programs belonged in public schools.

X **Groups.** The barriers represent policies that have run afoul of various identifiable groups. Resistance reflects the belief that the prekindergarten program will bring harm to children or that the group's own efforts and programs are threatened by the program.

- *Head Start coordinator were afraid that prekindergarten would take away their students.*
- *The state's strong right wing contingent banded together to resist the program.*

W **Economic.** Limited fiscal resources are identified as a significant barrier to implementing prekindergarten. Barriers include actions that will work to reduce funding for the program in the future, or broader economic issues that may work to destabilize future funding. Other state priorities may downgrade the fiscal priority of prekindergarten.

- *The public school budget has to come first, then prekindergarten.*
- *Technical assistance to prekindergarten programs had to be cut due to lack of funds.*

V **Political.** Political barriers result from the action of a political party or group that opposes state-funded prekindergarten. The program may have become identified with one political party and generates resistance from the opposing party.

- *When the other party won the recent election, the momentum from this program was slowed considerably.*
- *The State Senate objected to the prekindergarten policy.*

U **Geographical.** Differences in various regions in the state threaten the viability of the prekindergarten program. These barriers can reflect that fact that the program does not serve the needs of certain regions or is an unequal distribution of funds.

- *People in the rural areas were dead set against the prekindergarten program.*
- *The more affluent upstate population did not want to pay more in taxes to support the 'at-risk' program.*

T **Academic Evidence.** Some academicians have called attention to negative information about past programs. Academic barriers are grounded in theory and research and may reflect a negative view of the benefits of early childhood education, casting prekindergarten as either unnecessary or harmful to students.

- *Professor Jones cited a lack of research evidence in support of preschool programs.*
- *Dr. Smith questioned the accuracy of recent early childhood education studies.*

S **Media.** Various programs or publications may present a negative picture of prekindergarten programs. While the media often acts as a mirror for research and popular opinion, negative statements create barriers to program implementation.

- *A prominent author has written a book about the weakness of the research on preschool children.*
- *A late night talk show featured an outspoken critic of prekindergarten programs.*

R **Resources.** The lack of resources, especially personnel, usable space and transportation are identified as critical barriers to the implementation of prekindergarten. Without the resources in place to run the program, the program itself cannot be implemented on a small scale, much less state wide.

- *Schools did not have available classrooms for prekindergarten use.*
- *Scarcity of qualified teachers slowed the pace of program implementation.*

facilitators, some statements received a dual coding such as "The lack of transportation was a serious problem particularly since the state department was not willing to change their rules and regulations". This would be coded as (R) for lack of resources and (Z) for the institutional barrier of the regulation.

Three judges who were members of the research project independently coded each of the identified passages from the interview. The judges coded the previously identified facilitators and barriers by the categories noted in Tables 3 and 4. The three judges then met to review and discuss their individual codes. On passages whose coding was agreed upon by at least two judges, the decisions of those judges was accepted as the coding for that passage.

When there was disagreement, discussion between the judges allowed them to reach consensus and to sharpen the coding rules that distinguished each category. For example, it was determined that any response that dealt with the shortage of teachers or the inability to recruit teachers was automatically placed under the **resource** category. Any response dealing with the collaborative or cooperative work to build a program of personnel preparation was coded under **institution.** When such category sharpening took place, previously coded interviews were reviewed to see if such rulings changed the original coding. Some changes were made but these changes did not materially modify the results.

To determine the consistency and reliability of the judges' coding on facilitators and barriers, three scripts were pulled at random and counts made on the number and type of agreements by the judges who had independently coded these scripts. Table 5 provides the results of the judges coding on each of the three scripts. On facilitators, all three judges agreed on the classification 68 out of 108 times for a perfect agreement of 63%. In addition there were 34 other occasions where two of the three judges agreed on the coding for a passage. This resulted in agreement 95% of the time by either two or three judges. Five percent of the time, the judges coded the passage differently from one another and the final coding of those passages were reached by discussion and consensus.

Table 5 also shows the agreement data on the coding of barriers. In these three scripts, all judges agreed on their classifications 37 out of 52 times for a perfect agreement of 71%. In thirteen other instances two of the judges agreed for a 96% agreement of either two or three judges. There were two instances where there was no agreement on the barrier rating and those statements were coded by discussion and consensus. Graphs were constructed for each state based upon the aggregate codings of the interviewees.

After reaching a consensus on the major facilitators and barriers, we (the investigators) sent a draft copy of the authors' description of the state program plus a list of the major facilitators and barriers for their state. It was sent to all of the interviewees and asked for their comments or corrections. We have received comments from ten of the forty interviewees, or 25%. The comments ranged from correcting the spelling of names to more substantive comments, from wrong chronology to statements that we overestimated the collaboration going on between early childhood professionals. The amount of adjustments that were made in the final text based upon this information was minor.

Table 5. Judges Concordance: Three Illinois Scripts

Agreement* on Facilitators

	All Judges Agree	*Two Judges Agree*	*No Judges Agree*
I	15	8	2
II	31	12	2
III	22	14	2
Total	**68 (63%)**	**34 (32%)**	**6 (5%)**

Agreement* on Barriers

	All Judges Agree	*Two Judges Agree*	*No Judges Agree*
I	12	2	2
II	15	4	0
III	10	7	0
Total	**37 (71%)**	**13 (25%)**	**2 (4%)**

*On occasion when one judge would make a double rating (e.g., B/E) and the other two judges made a single rating (e.g., E), this was counted as "All Judges Agree" and the final rating was E.

State Case Studies

THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL includes case studies of the five states involved in this project. The material includes assembled printed material about the state and a synthesis of the conversations and interviews held with key persons in that state. For each state we trace the beginning of the prekindergarten program, its current status (as of 2000), and then present our analysis of the major facilitators and the significant barriers for the prekindergarten program.

GEORGIA

How It Began

The impetus for the Georgia prekindergarten program was that large numbers of Georgia students were dropping out or repeating grades. The prekindergarten program was offered as a readiness program for these children. Under the leadership of Governor Zell Miller, the program began as a pilot program for 'at-risk' children in 1992–93. During that year the Georgia Department of Education operated the program with 750 students. The program was expanded in 1993–94 with a total of 9,000 students served.

In 1995–96, again under the leadership of Governor Zell Miller, the program became universal; that is, all four-year olds were eligible. The program no longer dealt with only 'at-risk' children and the total number of children served increased to 44,000. In getting the public to approve a lottery in Georgia, Governor Miller pledged that all money would go to a prekindergarten program, in addition to HOPE scholarships and technology for the schools. This provided a solid and continuing source of funding for the prekindergarten program. These funds may be used for equipment, teacher's salaries and materials. There is also additional one-time start-up money that is available for new programs.

In 1996 Governor Miller established the Office of School Readiness (OSR) to oversee the major expansion in the prekindergarten program. This office reports to the Office of the Governor. With a staff of over 30 people it has guided the development of the program since the spring of 1996. The OSR has also started a twelve-year longitudinal study conducted by Georgia State University to determine the effects of the prekindergarten program.

Current Status

The Georgia prekindergarten program is one of the most extensive programs in the nation. In 1999–2000 it enrolled about 62,500 (63%) four-year-olds in approximately 3,170 classrooms while Head Start served another 10,000 children. In Georgia, 73% of the four-year-old children are either enrolled in the state program or Head Start. This voluntary program spent over $220 million in 1999–2000. The OSR contracts with public schools, Head Start programs and private providers to deliver services. It requires a 180-day

program and puts a premium on quality and high standards. The Georgia program requires a teacher-child ratio of 1:10 and a class size maximum of 20. Programs must operate for a 6-hour day.

The OSR also offers a variety of training efforts in order to upgrade the teaching skills of those working in the program. A lead teacher is required to have at least a CDA/CCP credential. Beginning in 2001–2002, lead teachers will be required to have a minimum of a valid Early Childhood Care and Education post-secondary technical institute diploma or degree, or a valid Advanced Early Childhood Care and Education post-secondary technical institute diploma or degree. A two-year associate degree (AA or AS) in Early Childhood Education or a Montessori diploma is also acceptable.

Analytic Findings

Figures 1a and 1b indicate the major facilitators and barriers for policy change in Georgia. The chart represents the percentage of coded responses obtained by combining the responses received from Georgia.

Facilitators

Figure 1a shows that the largest percentage of facilitators was in the **institutional** category. There were a total of 128 responses from 11 interviewees showing the emphasis on implementing this legislation. One way that institutional support was demonstrated was by the establishment of the OSR the governor. Several people expressed some concern that the Department of Education did not appear to be a welcoming place for the prekindergarten program. They saw the creation of the Office of School Readiness in 1996 as a positive move.

> *The Director of OSR reported directly to the governor, not a formal board. OSR ran like a private business, not a bureaucracy.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

When the prekindergarten program was first established, it was recognized that developmentally appropriate instruction was needed. The Director of Early Childhood Education within the Department of Education had a child development background, so she made sure that the programs followed that philosophy.

The program has also raised the awareness level of the general public as to why early education is important and what to look for in a quality program.

> *We have raised the awareness of parents in terms of what an educational program for four-year-olds should look like and the quality issues that go along with appropriately trained teachers... We've raised the awareness of the public to the extent that the public is aware that there are appropriate things that four-year olds do and there are developmental milestones that four-year-olds don't all reach at the same time.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

The elevated percentages for **individual** and **political** factors reflect the commitment of many people, but especially of former Governor Zell Miller, in establishing this program. It also represents how much these two categories are intertwined in Georgia.

The governor had a vision and was determined that the prekindergarten program would happen. He was adamant and proud of the program. He felt that people were either onboard or not, and if they were not, then they needed to get out of his way.

Many people were represented in the establishment of the prekindergarten program.

> *The Chancellor of the University System chaired the R16 committee. It also included K through 12 superintendents and the director of OSR. Then it had representatives from universi-*

ties, colleges, and technical schools. It was an attempt to say, you guys are all in the business of education, and you identify your critical needs and work together to solve them.

–Georgia interviewee

Economic factors were important in Georgia. The fact that this program had a new funding source cannot be overlooked.

...the stars were aligned perfectly for us in Georgia. We had a governor that went out on a limb and passed a funding source, the lottery. Even with a powerful governor, it would have taken us years to get this program in the place that it is today if we hadn't had a new funding source. If we had had to cut monies out of an existing budget it would have been impossible or at least, very difficult.

–Georgia interviewee

The governor led the battle to implement a lottery on the basis that the money would be used for a prekindergarten program, a college scholarship program and technology. He did not have to reallocate existing resources from other ongoing projects. That avoided legislative battles.

–Georgia interviewee

Groups included primarily Head Start and private child care, but also advocacy groups that banded together to support a universal program. Our interviews indicated that child care groups and Head Starts were especially active in Georgia.

Head Start came onboard, they already served four-year-olds, and they sort of were a natural fit for it. They just sort of, I don't remember when they came on board, but at some point in the process, they wanted to be players.

–Georgia interviewee

The private child care providers went to the governor and said that the prekindergarten program was taking away business but that a private-state partnership could be developed. Private providers said that they could provide the same services as the public schools and, therefore, should be funded by the state. There was an agreement on that point and prekindergarten services were provided in many different settings.

Groups and **resources** are almost equal as facilitators in Georgia. Space became a large issue when the program became universal.

...not the only reason, but one of the big reasons the private child care community was included, is capacity. There was no way to start up a program for 40,000 or 45,000 kids without the use of the centers. The schools didn't have the space, and that's how fast this program started. They needed capacity and that's what brought the child care community in.

–Georgia interviewee

Some systems are doing creative things like renting space in churches, renting space in community centers and in housing areas. They might be renovating a closed school and setting up a center-based...

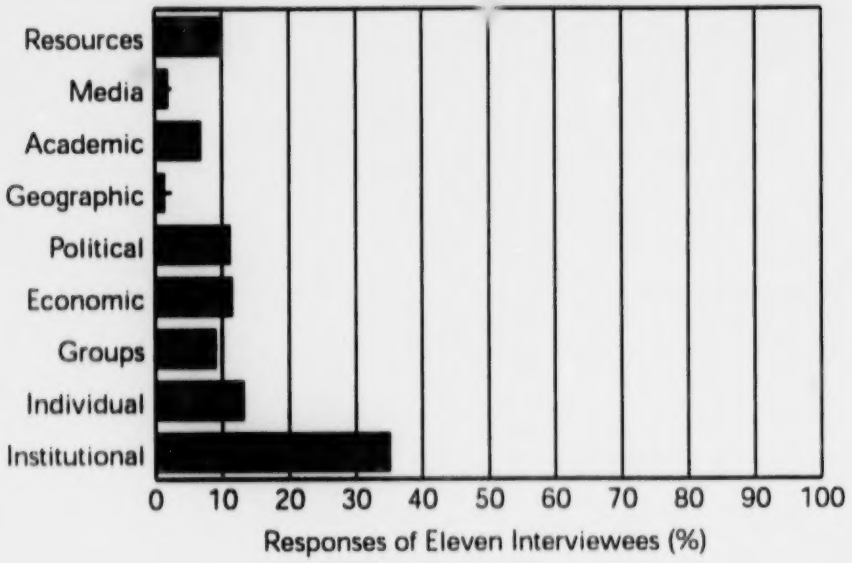
–Georgia interviewee

Teacher training is also a resource issue that has been addressed often.

If you volunteered to participate in it, then you had to take a certain amount of training that would be delivered. That enabled us to train a lot of people, both public and private sector, that were working with young children, and give them the very latest research and the latest training techniques in early childhood education. That also had a tremendous spillover effect, because most of these private providers are also providing services for three- and two-year-olds-and even infants.

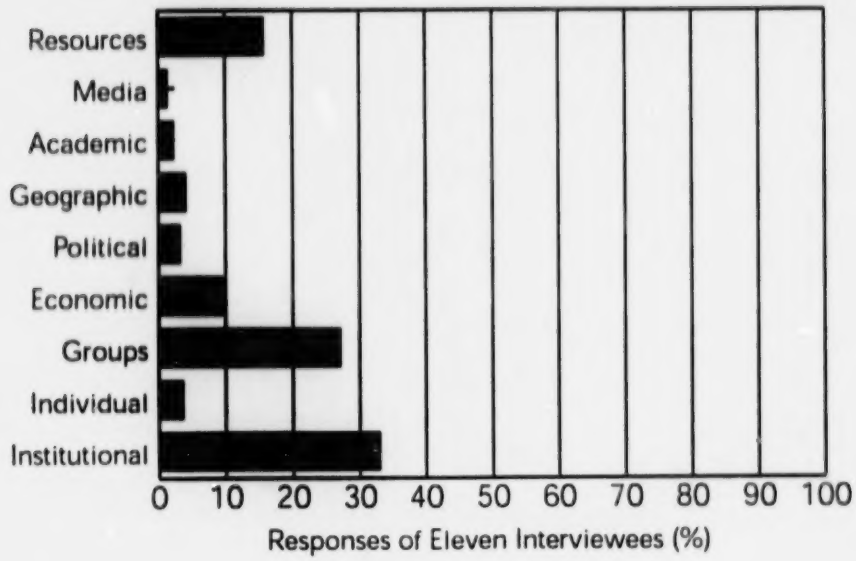
–Georgia interviewee

Figure 1a. Georgia Facilitators



Total Items Cited	
Resources	36
Media	7
Academic	25
Geographic	5
Political	1
Economic	42
Groups	33
Individual	48
Institutional	128
Total	**365**

Figure 1b. Georgia Barriers



Total Items Cited	
Resources	35
Media	3
Academic	5
Geographic	9
Political	7
Economic	21
Groups	60
Individual	8
Institutional	73
Total	**221**

The percentages for the **academic** category reflect the standardization of curriculum, equipment, hours, training, and activities, but the program also represents a drive to be proactive instead of reactive.

> *The idea that we were getting a head start, doing something before the fact, to prevent children from not being ready for school. Something, where we were doing something up front instead of having to deal with, Oops, this child went through kindergarten and was not ready so lets remediate. Let's refer to special education let's do all these things.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

Geography and **media** were noticeably absent as facilitators in Georgia. Issues were accommodated as they arose, especially in rural communities, so geography was not a measurable influence. The media played a negligible role in Georgia.

Barriers

Figure 1b represents the barrier statements that were presented by the interviewees in Georgia. The high percentage of responses in the **institutional** (a total of 73 separate responses) and **group** (60 separate responses) areas reflect the major difficulties faced when going from a program for at-risk children to serving all four-year-old children. Child care proponents were horrified because the prekindergarten program would take away their four-year-olds just like the schools had taken away their five-year-olds (into kindergarten) and their school-age children with after-school programs. Now the four-year-olds would be marching out the doors and they were very upset. Many of the school programs were in mobile units with no bathrooms and some did not have 'child friendly' spaces.

Child care felt they could offer the same or better services and they should be included as a player also.

> *At the time OSR was established, Governor Miller had multiple political problems with the prekindergarten program. Not all parents were pleased, private child care providers felt that they were not receiving their share of programs or funding, the Head Start community was accusing private providers and school systems of "stealing" their children, the education community did not consider prekindergarten to be an integral component, the Christian Coalition felt that government was imposing more requirements on families and wanted the children to remain at home, and the local press was extremely critical about the expensive lottery program.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

The Christian right fought to keep children at home with their mother. They feared that having a 'free' program would encourage mothers to return to work outside the home. Additionally the ongoing function of the OSR in the regulation of programs was a difficult issue. It is a licensing agency for programs that have a state-funded prekindergarten program but not for locations that are a part of the program.

> *What happens is a child care center gets a contract one year, but at the end of the year, Office of School Readiness says your quality wasn't there, you don't have enough qualified teachers on staff, or whatever. They'll pull the contract for the next year, and do a contract with another organization. Well, then that business, that child care center then goes back to the Department of Human Resources to be regulated the following year. What you get is this patchwork kind of regulatory system. The two entities happen to be working as close as they can at the moment, but you have got bureaucratic turf.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

Resources, or the lack of time for implementation, represented a barrier in Georgia because of

the need for trained teachers and a constant work force in child care and Head Start. Beginning in the school year 2001–2002, prekindergarten teachers must have a minimum of a two-year Early Childhood degree in order to teach.

> *... the good teachers in centers wanted to be prekindergarten teachers, because they get more money as a prekindergarten teacher. Then their goal was to go to the public schools. The kind of cascading effect is that a teacher gets the training required to be a prekindergarten lead teacher and then they move on very quickly to the public schools where they get more benefits.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

The quick start-up and lack of training were also initial barriers for some programs.

> *In the first year, some teachers were not trained until the spring in the particular models that the schools had adopted as their approach... the training came too late and it was only for lead teachers initially. Their assistants weren't initially trained, and you know as well as I do, when you go back to a program and only one of the teachers is trained, then the implementation often is not effectively carried through. The administrators initially were not trained either. Thus the on-site support network was missing.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

The only other barrier to receive much mention was **economic.** In talking with the Office of School Readiness, we were told that there was plenty of money, but in talking with providers, we received a different picture.

> *...the program's never been fully funded, and from the very beginning it was never fully funded. They set this budget and said the governor wants it. They said this is how much money we have to spend, this is, therefore, what you're going to get and there was never a request for information about how much it was really going to cost.*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

There was also some concern that the lottery might not produce enough income or that more money will be needed for the HOPE scholarships. Additionally there was some concern among conservative groups, because this was lottery money made from 'gambling.'

> *Because this is mixed up in lottery funds, the lottery is considered by some not to be appropriate, but yet the lottery dollars are used for good things, good education programs. Some members of the faith community had to work that out for themselves...*
>
> –Georgia interviewee

It is interesting to note that **geographic, individual, political, academic** and **media** categories were referred to only minimally as barriers in Georgia. **Geography** was referred to as a barrier only as parents dealt with the location of programs or transportation issues, especially in rural communities. **Individual** and **political** received minimal mention, only when dealing with the State Superintendent. The **media** and **academic** areas played an almost negligible role in Georgia, except to provide rationale for the program.

Major Facilitators

1. **The Commitment of Former Governor Zell Miller.** There was no doubt among the interviewees that former Governor Zell Miller played a major role in the establishment of the prekindergarten program. He was determined that no group, individual, or administrative difficulties were going to stand in his way.

2. **The Availability of the Lottery.** A state lottery was passed to fund this and two other educational objectives. The money is used solely for education. This provided a new funding source, which did not dilute existing funding for other state programs.
3. **The Establishment of the Office of School Readiness.** OSR was established in the spring of 1996. It was created as a separate agency reporting to the governor's office. As a separate agency, the OSR was not subject to the rules and regulations of other agencies and did not have to answer to a board of directors.
4. **The Establishment of Coordinating Councils.** A Coordinating Council was required in each locality but this requirement was dropped after the programs became operational. This brought together stakeholders and encouraged collaboration. This collaboration was often accomplished with a public-private partnership.
5. **The Availability of Research on Early Childhood.** The early childhood program used and benefited from the research of the Perry Preschool project as well as more recent brain research. The OSR emphasized research-based quality and spent a lot of time and money in advertising the program.

Major Barriers

1. **The Initial Resistance by Public School Personnel.** The public schools were originally resistant to a universal program. They were reluctant to collaborate with child care centers and Head Starts even though they did not have enough space and facilities.
2. **The Fears of Child Care and Head Start.** There was an initial fear by child care and Head Start personnel that they might lose the population of children that they were serving. Increased collaboration alleviated many of these fears.
3. **The Christian Coalition.** The Christian Coalition fought to keep children at home with their mothers. The coalition felt that having a 'free' program encourages mothers to return to work outside the home. They were also very opposed to using the *Anti-Bias Curriculum*, published by NAEYC, in any preschool program.
4. **The Difficulty of Finding and Maintaining Quality Teachers.** There continues to be a lack of trained personnel. Georgia will again raise their educational requirements for teachers for the 2001–2002 school year, making it difficult to find and keep qualified employees. This is especially true for Head Start programs and child care centers. Employees of these programs with teaching certificates often move to the public schools to receive better pay and benefits.
5. **Space Limitations.** The 'at-risk' program was originally housed in the public schools. Once the program became universal, schools did not have adequate space and were forced to look at other alternatives.
6. **Top-Down Decision Making.** The program was the 'dream' of Zell Miller and was both supported and pushed by him. There was little input from others, which led to some initial difficulties when it was time for implementation.

Georgia Summary

This change in policy for four-year-olds was accomplished more rapidly than in other states under the enthusiastic leadership of an individual, Governor Zell Miller. The rapid implementation of the program to include well over half of the four-year-olds

was made possible by the presence of a funding source, the lottery, which was earmarked, in part, for this for four-year-old program.

The Governor used a variety of institutional strategies including bypassing potential opposition or reluctance on the part of the Department of Education by moving the program into a newly formed Office of School Readiness. This Office reports directly to the Governor and allows him to supervise the program's progress and also to generously staff this Office, providing materials, staff development, and technical assistance to local programs. The use of Coordinating Councils to ensure input from local persons was another institutional strategy. Coordinating Councils were required in each locality to ensure local participation and provide a basis for collaboration. This is no longer a requirement because it often became a logistical problem. This requirement did however, establish initial participation by many different groups.

The swift establishment and implementation of the program created problems in their own right. Many needed resources (including trained personnel, space, and transportation) were lacking. There was a limited collaboration between professionals working with young children and educators that remains a challenge to be met. It appears that the program will remain in place as long as the lottery provides fiscal support and general public support remains high.

ILLINOIS

How It Began

The prekindergarten program in Illinois began as part of a comprehensive program of school reform presented to the legislature in 1985–1986. Before that time a great deal of groundwork had been laid by the State Board of Education working with a variety of advocacy groups. Twelve position papers were written by experts on early childhood issues to provide professional justification for early childhood programs.

The target children for the program were designated as children 'at-risk' because of poverty, the use of English as a second language, other disadvantages. A screening process was used to identify such children as 'at-risk.' Funding was administered through local school boards and was obtained through a Request for Proposal (RFP) format with applications being made by local school boards. The legislature felt that this approach was more likely to produce quality results. Local districts were allowed leeway in determining the approach while maintaining quality. The local districts were required to submit their method of determining 'at-risk' and program design to the State Board of Education for approval.

One major advantage of the program was the early emphasis on quality that was reflected in the high program standards and required teacher certification. Demonstration programs such as the Valeska Hinton Center in Peoria also helped to publicize and illustrate positive outcomes. A major effort was made to develop collaboration with other key early childhood stakeholders (e.g., Head Start, child care, and so on). Strong advocacy voices were heard from both the private sector (Voices for Illinois Children, McCormick Tribune Foundation, and so on) and from professional groups such as the Illinois AEYC.

Current Status

The program has been growing steadily in size and influence in the 1990s. From a $3 million beginning, Illinois spent almost $200 million on early childhood projects during the school year 1999–2000 and served 55,000 'at-risk' children (15% of the statewide population of three- and four-year-olds with a higher percentage of four-year-olds served. The statewide percentage of fours that were served was about 22%). Another 40,000 children were served through Head Start. Localities must receive funds through the public schools, but they may subcontract with Head Start programs and child care centers to provide the services.

The state funds full-day and half-day programs although most are half-day programs. One important component of the program is that collaboration between agencies lets local programs provide wraparound services that extend the hours of service. The staff-child ratio may not exceed 1:10 and no more than 20 children can be served in each classroom. A continued effort in higher education has helped to produce a cadre of certified teachers to provide educational services for these young children. Recent publicity concerning brain research and its potential meaning for young children has helped to consolidate strong public support for the program.

Initial discussions have taken place about a universal program for four-year-olds, and the State Board of Education has endorsed a full-day program for four-year-olds. Major factors that continue to influence the program include the rapid increase of mothers in the workforce and the recent welfare laws that require child care for the children of working mothers. Although there continues to be scattered opposition on moral grounds (undercutting family values, and so on), such opposition appears to have diminished. The program remains funded only one year at a time and is not included in the continuing budget. As a grant program it is considered somewhat more vulnerable and at the mercy of economic ups and downs.

Analytic Findings

Figures 2a and 2b indicate the percentage of responses in each of the categories. Although the charts look similar in proportion of response, there were 250 comments coded as facilitators compared to 105 comments as barriers.

Facilitators

The two most frequent categories noted by the interviewees are **institutional** (95 separate comments) and **resources** (42 separate comments). These categories reflect a wide variety of initiatives that have been taken in Illinois to establish a system of care and education for four-year-olds. Some policies reflected regulations regarding the implementation of the program and the need for collaboration.

> *The whole state is blanketed with early childhood programs. One of the things we worked very hard at in the beginning ... was to be sure that there was at least one program in every county when we started out.*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

> *Private child care agencies cannot apply directly to the Illinois State Board of Education for the preschool (prekindergarten) grant but they may subcontract with the Chicago Public Schools for funds to provide service to 'at-risk' preschool (prekindergarten) children. Annually, part of the Chicago Public Schools grant is subcontracted to child care agencies...*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

> *We have done such things as encourage partnerships between school districts and child care providers for wraparound services. Some districts have contracted (subcontracted) with child care providers and actually put certified teachers in these classrooms, along with materials and supplies.*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

Illinois began with considerably more **resources** (materials and personnel) than did some of the other states in our study. Those resources allowed Illinois to establish strong standards for personnel and programs. Illinois also set high standards for the program.

> *Illinois is making a very strong concerted effort with all of the early childhood community towards higher professional standards.*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

Other categories that played a role in facilitation were **economic, groups, individuals, and political.** The gradual growth of the program allowed for the necessary funding for the development of local programs. The role played by various advocacy **groups** was particularly relevant in the early stages of the program.

> *Voices for Illinois Children has also been a key player in all of this. They have consistently brought together the education, child care, and Head Start communities around public policy issues. ... They have been a coordinating group.*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

There were many different **individuals** that played significant roles in the development of the program. One key legislator operated effectively within the House, other individuals were connected with various advocacy groups.

> *Lana Hostetler was very influential. She was our lobbyist with the State Legislature and was really very pivotal. She was President of the NAEYC and she was pivotal in getting both the increases in State Pre-K (prekindergarten) funding and the certification for prekindergarten.*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

The **academic** area played some role here in articulating the rationale and laying the groundwork for the professional program. Brain research and the early research on intervention programs for young children convinced key decision makers that the prekindergarten program was based on sound academic principles. Neither **geography** nor **media** appeared to play a significant role in program initiation or development.

Barriers

As with other states, Illinois had its share of barriers to overcome in the implementation of this prekindergarten program but these barriers did not appear to significantly impact or do serious damage to the program itself. Figure 4b indicates the percentage of findings in each category and once again **institutional** (35%) and **resources** (28%) played a major role in the creation of barriers.

> *Everybody thinks early childhood is wonderful, but nobody appreciates what it takes to have it function either in terms of integrating it into the school or of building quality into the programs themselves.*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

> *There is a significant frustration. If you get some credit hours at a junior college, some of those don't transfer to the senior colleges. The gulf between those two is actually harmful for encouraging a good outcome, that is more and more people in early childhood with four-year degrees.*
>
> –Illinois interviewee

The other two categories that appear in over 10% of the responses were **economic** and **groups**. The **economic** issue was whether there was money available to carry out the program and whether the state legislature would commit itself to supporting prekinder-gartens in a more consistent and predictable fashion.

We've had a survey done by one of our local foundations and in the city and in the state everybody thinks that early childhood education is important and that we should support it, but not with their dollars.

–Illinois interviewee

The barriers established by **groups** seemed to represent an initial resistance of school personnel to the concept of this program.

In the ideal world I would think that every school district in Illinois would have a very close working relationship with all of the child care programs in their community in order to make the transition from child care to regular school classrooms really good. But, no, for the most part the educators are just going to wait and see what happens in kindergarten.

–Illinois interviewee

There has been some concern about group negative reaction and this has occasionally been so serious that it changed the legislative strategy in the original passage of the legislation.

The major opposition was political from the far right. ... The legislators who were involved, and the powers that be in the governor's office, wanted it to be a separate bill, so that it couldn't bring down the entire school reform bill if the right wing was successful in defeating it (the prekindergarten bill).

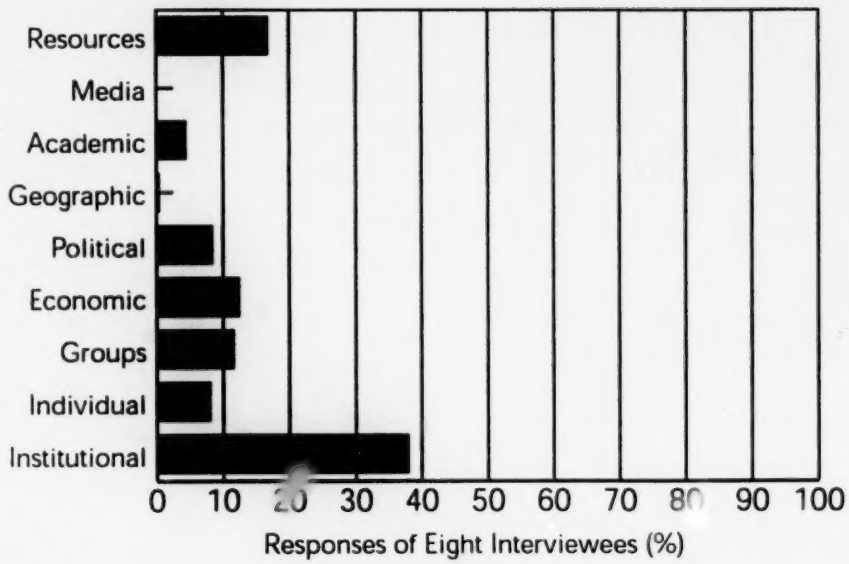
–Illinois interviewee

There are few **individuals** who could be identified in direct opposition to the program and the program also had few barriers from a **geographic, academic,** or **media** standpoint. The majority of the barriers were natural ones of economics and the lack of an infrastructure to support the program.

Major Facilitators

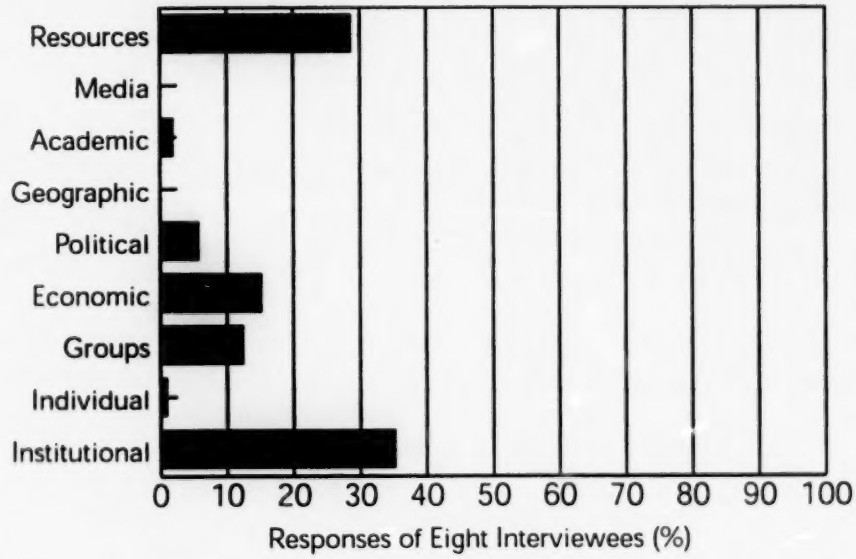
1. **Gradual Implementation.** This program is now 15 years old. The gradual rate of implementation has allowed advocates time to 'get their act together' and to respond to objections made at the local and state level.
2. **Consistent Public Support.** It did not seem difficult to convince the general public that prekindergarten was a good idea for 'at-risk' children. This brought forth continued support from legislators and governors for the program in a type of 'snowball effect.' This legislative support implied general public support, or at least, lack of strong opposition.
3. **Strong Advocacy.** There were many advocacy voices being expressed for this program from a variety of groups in the private and professional sectors of Illinois. Even the higher education community, a nonplayer in other states, took a positive role here.
4. **Program Administration.** The administration of the program through local school boards was a popular move as was the Request for Proposal model that committed localities to certain standards. The flexibility that allowed for subcontracting and for mixing funds for wraparound services was another positive element.
5. **Program Quality.** From the very beginning of the program there has been an emphasis on program quality that reassured the public that their money was being well spent. In particular the high personnel standards, regardless of whether the program was in child care or the local schools helped to solidify the program.

Figure 2a. Illinois Facilitators



Total Items Cited	
Resources	42
Media	0
Academic	11
Geographic	1
Political	21
Economic	31
Groups	29
Individual	20
Institutional	95
Total	**250**

Figure 2b. Illinois Barriers



Total Items Cited	
Resources	30
Media	0
Academic	2
Geographic	0
Political	6
Economic	16
Groups	13
Individual	1
Institutional	37
Total	**105**

Major Barriers

Although there were clearly major barriers to be overcome, the interviewers and analysts never had the feeling that any of these barriers were sufficient to do real harm to the concept or the program.

1. **Agency Collaboration.** When the program first began there was a lack of collaborative support from the schools and the child care communities and this still exists to some extent today.
2. **Long-Term Financial Security.** Despite the longevity of the program there remains insecurity regarding the financial support for the program, which is annually voted upon in the legislature.
3. **Lack of Bilingual Staff.** There are a large number of children in Illinois for whom English is a second language and the program, consequently, places an emphasis on teachers who are skilled in bilingual communication. Such teachers remain in very short supply.
4. **Conservative Political Opposition.** As has been true in other states there is opposition to the program on the basis of conflicting values and concerns, particularly voiced by the conservative right political factions.
5. **Space and Transportation.** The lack of resources to meet common problems of where the prekindergarten programs will be housed and how students get to that place has put a brake on the expansion of this program.

Illinois Summary

This prekindergarten program, now over 15 years old, seemed to enjoy consistent public support for the stated goal of helping 'at-risk' children succeed in school. The gradual implementation of the program allowed local administrators to get ready to participate. The flexibility in financing and program design encouraged strong advocacy from private and professional sectors. The consistent emphasis on program quality also aided public acceptance.

It would seem that Illinois would likely go to a universal prekindergarten plan in the near future if the political and fiscal factors remain positive.

NEW YORK

How It Began

New York State operates two prekindergarten programs: Experimental Prekindergarten, which has been in existence for almost 35 years, and Universal Prekindergarten (UPK), which was implemented in the 1998–1999 school year in 68 low-income districts. Experimental Prekindergarten was designed to supplement the early learning environments of disadvantaged children and provide them with the social and cognitive skills necessary to be successful in the public school program. All children within those districts were eligible to attend. According to our interviewees the Experimental Prekindergarten Programs had demonstrated good results and was, therefore, considered a good model the Universal Prekindergarten program.

UPK was first developed in 1997, under the guidance and direction of several legislators and key educational leaders: the lieutenant governor, the Speaker of the Assembly (Sheldon Silver), and members of the State Department of Education. There was a groundswell of interest and support for educational reform to which these leaders responded.

Provisions for UPK were included in a larger educational reform bill, the LADDER Proposal. This proposal contained several provisions, such as reduced class size in grades K–3, full-day kindergarten, increased technology and capital resources, and support for early childhood educational development in the form of universal prekindergarten. The Universal Prekindergarten statute specifically called for:

- Accessibility to all children whose parents desired the program (the universal aspect).
- Public-private partnership with a mandated minimum collaboration (the money is provided to the local schools. At least 10% of the allocated funds for a district's UPK program are to be spent in collaboration with other early childhood organizations [e.g., child care providers, Head Start]).
- Phase-in approach, which would gradually increase the number of districts eligible to apply for the program; agencies in each district compete for funding to provide the program.
- Educationally-based curriculum and program design.
- Advisory boards for planning and oversight.
- No parent fees.

Current Status

As of the 1999–2000 school year, UPK had been implemented voluntarily by 99 of the more than 700 school districts in New York. The 99 include the five largest districts within the state: New York City, Buffalo, Syracuse, Rochester, and Yonkers. The legislation that enacted UPK did so on a limited, phase-in basis covering 4–5 years. The number of eligible districts has grown to 241, but preference must be given to economically disadvantaged children within these districts. Of these districts, only 99 have chosen to implement the program. One of the reasons for this low number of participants is the uncertainty of future funding and late budget allocations. Out of 275,000 four-year-olds in the state, about 35,000 (13%) were served in the 1999–2000 school year. Under the phase-in approach, this number should grow until the program is universally implemented. The terms of service are 180 days, 2.5 hours per day, and $2700 in state funds per student per year. All UPK classes are required to have certified teachers by 2001–2002 school year. There is no minimum class size with a maximum of 20 children and a ratio of 10 students per adult.

Provisions mandating UPK specify that programs must provide literacy education, assistance in psychological, social, cognitive and familial development, assistance to family, assistance to students with disabilities, and agreement with continuing education programs. Funding levels were $100 million for the 1999–2000 school year, with an increase to $225 million for the 2000–2001 school year, and a planned increase to $500 million for the 2001–2002 school year. Completion of full implementation was planned for the 2001–2002 school year, but this was pushed back to the 2002–2003 school year.

Analytic Findings

Figures 3a and 3b graphically represent the coding of our interviews. Results were grouped by percentage of responses for the categories rated by the research team.

Facilitators

As indicated in Figure 3a, the major facilitator for New York State was institutional with 67 statements given by the seven interviewees. **Institutional** support was manifested in many different ways. For some, support was the promotion of the program within an institution or organization:

> *State Education, for the last four or five years has done just an excellent job in pitching the case and if you pitch first the case about higher standards, then I think there's an acceptance that what has to follow is the resources to make that happen.*
>
> –New York interviewee

In addition to promoting the program, institutional factors were also critical in the design and resource allocation for the program:

> *One of the things that State Ed did...early on was to put together a Universal Prekindergarten external work group...you might call it an advisory group.*
>
> –New York interviewee

Prominent in the institutional facilitators, therefore, were actions undertaken from central government offices to ensure that the program was well planned and supported from within the State Department of Education.

As shown in Figure 3a, **political** (almost 20%) factors ran just ahead of **groups** (15%) as a facilitator. In New York, the key political facilitators were the actions of legislators to ensure that UPK passed with sufficient resources.

> *The legislation set forth an implementation strategy that covered the first four years of funding.*
>
> –New York interviewee

> *One of the things that will become clear in the interview here is that this is a very bottom up initiative, without the support of the Governor, and initiated by the State Assembly, which is Democratic.*
>
> –New York interviewee

The next strongest facilitator was the **groups** with interests connected to Universal Prekindergarten. These groups primarily included Head Start and private child care, but also included advocacy groups that banded together to support UPK legislation.

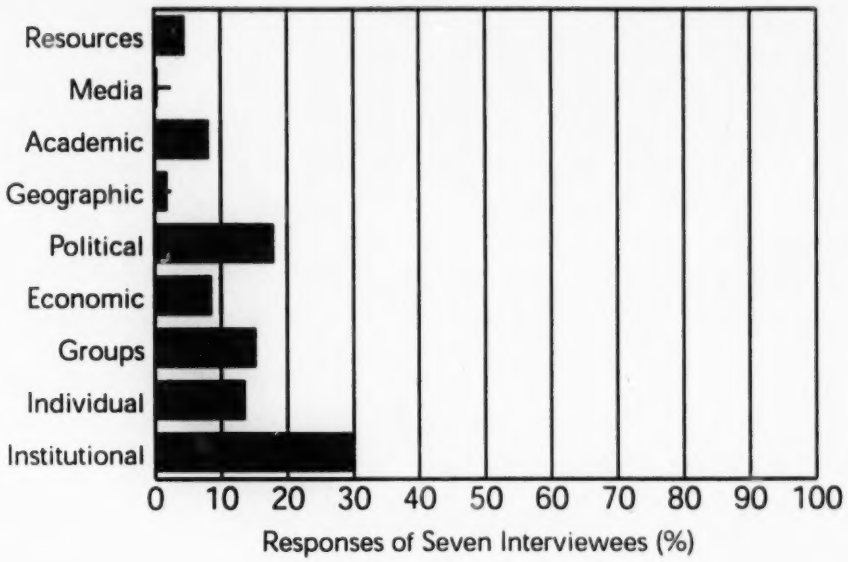
> *Child care advocates helped design the law, working in many of these state CC&R organizations. The New York State Child Care Coordinating Council, an outfit called SCAA, the State Communities Aid Association, and Head Start. Those folks pulled together in a coalition and played a significant role in attaching this legislation to something called the LADDER Proposal...*
>
> –New York interviewee

Clearly, part of the impetus for collaboration was that a minimum of 10% of UPK funds were to be out-sourced to programs outside of the public school system. Outside agencies had a vested interest, therefore, in becoming involved with the legislation. Many districts went far beyond the mandatory 10% allotment to community agencies.

> *...51% of the funds are going to community-based organizations is a demonstration that the law was effectively drafted and that it does provide protections (for outside child-care agencies).*
>
> –New York interviewee

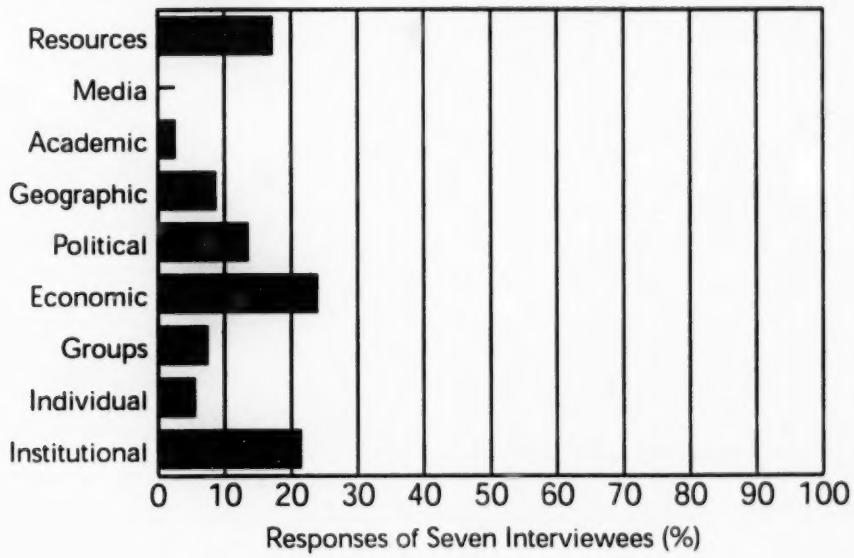
All interview respondents identified the Speaker of the Assembly as one of the key leaders responsible for supporting, promoting and fighting for UPK, which was part of a larger reform program, the LADDER Program.

Figure 3a. New York Facilitators



Total Items Cited	
Resources	10
Media	1
Academic	18
Geographic	4
Political	40
Economic	19
Groups	34
Individual	30
Institutional	67
Total	**223**

Figure 3b. New York Barriers



Total Items Cited	
Resourcess	28
Media	0
Academic	4
Geographic	14
Political	22
Economic	39
Groups	12
Individual	9
Institutional	35
Total	**163**

Sheldon Silver, who's the head of the Assembly in New York State, really put together what was called the LADDER Program...I know that Speaker Silver took that lead and developed legislation that would implement all this.

–New York interviewee

As in other states, therefore, we identified the actions of a key **political** figure as critical to the implementation of UPK. This is especially true when the political arena has mixed feelings about UPK.

The **economic** facilitators are the presence of sufficient funding, despite actions by political opponents to 'block grant' the program or limit its funding.

In the legislative session of 1998, they added $17 million to the appropriation and amended the per child rate for that one year...making it higher.

–New York interviewee

Consistent increases in budgeting were scheduled as part of the UPK package. The program started with $100 million in its first year, with a scheduled increase to $500 million annually in its fourth year. The money not only benefited the UPK program but also brought additional attention to child-care issues.

Academic facilitators also contributed. A significant step was the demonstration that "child care is educational" and not just babysitting. Of particular interest in New York State was the effect of both brain research that indicated an earlier developmental start might be correlated with higher success, and the current accountability trend, which focuses on measuring educational outcomes and using these outcomes to direct future opportunities.

Resources, geography, and media were all minimal facilitators. **Resources** sources helped the UPK process in promoting collaboration with higher education to produce more teachers. Lack of resources proved a much stronger barrier in New York than facilitator. **Geography,** similarly, was more a barrier than facilitator as parents dealt with transportation issues, especially in rural communities. The **media** played a very small role as facilitator and barrier in New York State.

Barriers

Figure 3b shows the categories of barriers to implementation of UPK in New York State. The number of barriers (163) was higher than in the other states. The often late budget in New York produced the strongest barrier, an **economic** barrier. Because funding is often not secure until the last weeks before school starts, school districts in New York have been hesitant to apply for UPK. Parents, in turn, are not willing to wait until August to arrange child care.

Another economic barrier took the form of attempted block granting by Governor Pataki. Block-granted funds have the potential to make UPK monies available for other educational purposes. An additional economic concern was the general expense, and whether the state can afford the program for the long term. This sentiment was felt both in the legislature and the general public:

It isn't that people think that it isn't a good program. People say we can't afford it.

–New York interviewee

Limited financial resources have also impeded the planning and resources dedicated to UPK. Combined with the continual struggle for adequate allocation levels (currently at $2,700 in state funds per child for half-day programs), economics is the largest barrier that New York State must contend with.

It is important to note the relations between economic and political factors. It was clear from our interviews that a lack of funding and the late budget reflected **political** negotiation between the

Governor's office, the State Senate and the State Assembly. Therefore, the fact that outright political barriers are not as highly ranked is somewhat deceiving, given the influence political leaders have had upon deciding and implementing a budget.

Institutional factors, followed closely by resources, were also considerable barriers to UPK. **Institutional** barriers were evident when the State Department of Education was unprepared for the demands of such a large program.

> *The (Superintendents) are... so focused on the seven-zillion things that are before them that this is low on their priority list.*
>
> –New York interviewee

> *There is no transportation aid that comes with this categorical program and the transportation policy is somewhat punitive.*
>
> –New York interviewee

Resources also presented a significant barrier to UPK. In addition to money, lack of space, staff, and personnel continued to be a persistent problem.

> *The first thing that districts that did not have pre-Ks (prekindergarten) in the past was say, where the heck are we going to get all this classroom space?*
>
> –New York interviewee

> *There's just no way that they're going to be able to have all these programs staffed with certified teachers. It's just that certified teachers aren't there.*
>
> –New York interviewee

Political factors narrowly led geographic factors as barriers. Governor Pataki and the Republican Senate have not shown great interest in the program. In this matter, Governor Pataki was closely aligned with the Republican-dominated Senate and was an example of an **individual** acting as a barrier.

> *I can even be more specific by saying that the State Assembly and the State Senate disagree on the program. The Assembly wants funds to be appropriated specifically for the program, and the Senate wants to block grant the funds...it's a constant battle.*
>
> –New York interviewee

> *UPK was laid on the table by the Leader of the State Assembly at the last minute in August of 1997, as a bargaining chip, and the Governor bought it because it gave him something else in return. It was a swap that he bought into without enthusiasm.*
>
> –New York interviewee

Geographic barriers were expressed in the different urban and rural needs. The largest urban centers were New York City, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Albany. Clearly, urban and rural needs were often very different and this difference added further complications to the design of UPK regulations and state-wide implementation.

The most prominent geographic issue was the rural transportation need or at least the choice of prekindergarten center so that the children could commute with parents to a center convenient to the workplace. Often, the prekindergarten schedule of rural sites conflicted with the parent's work schedule. This is especially true for parents who live in rural areas yet commute to other areas for work. This conflict created a barrier for those parents who wished to use the state supported center but could not arrange for care after the program closed for the day. Additionally, rural areas often have limited transportation resources, because there are no additional funds from the state to provide transportation for prekindergarten students.

> *You could use some of your money, your $2,700 per kid for transportation, but if you take out the $2,000 a year it costs for transportation, then you have no education to give them when you get there.*
>
> –New York interviewee

The remaining categories (groups, academic, and media) provided only minimal barriers to implementation. **Group** resistance came primarily from groups such as the teacher's unions, Head Start and Experimental Prekindergarten providers who didn't express much enthusiasm for the program. The 10% minimum mandate did a lot; however, to allay the fears of these various groups. **Academically,** higher education was not resistant to UPK, but perhaps sluggish in providing the resources necessary to increase the number of qualified professionals. Finally, the **media** had no noted influence as a barrier.

Major Facilitators

1. **Presence of Strong Administration.** The state leadership that took on the prekindergarten program was especially well-versed in the needs of communities as well as appropriate child care programs. Making prekindergarten universal required more than implementation of a program. It required the creation of a system such that the program became incorporated into state identity. The leadership active in New York carefully crafted the program to achieve these goals.
2. **Support from the Assembly and Speaker Silver (LADDER).** Speaker Silver was especially important for maintaining pressure on the Senate and the Governor to allocate funding for the educational reform LADDER Proposal, which included the provision for UPK.
3. **Large Numbers of Advocacy Groups.** Advocacy groups within the state also pushed for the implementation of a universal program. Groups such as the preschool education community, the Early Childhood Strategic Group, State Communities Aid, as well as coalitions that formed to support and protect prekindergarten legislation represented the grassroots demand for a universal program.
4. **Collaboration.** Collaboration was especially effective in reducing opposition from Head Start and private child care sectors. With the mandate for at least 10% outsourcing, and the reality that more than 10% might be used in programs other than the public schools, early child care programs had an incentive to become involved in the Universal Prekindergarten Program.
5. **Presence of Research.** Well-publicized brain development research and intervention research into the improvement of cognitive development played an important role in generating public support as well as the political will to introduce the policy.

Major Barriers

1. **Consistently Late Budgets.** New York's annual budget is due for approval in April but in the last ten years, the budget has often not been approved until the summer months (June, July, and August). This presented a significant difficulty for educational districts making the decision to apply for funding.
2. **Lack of Resources.** Building a cadre of trained personnel takes the time and cooperation of higher education. Space was an additional factor to be considered. Generally, public education is entering a period in which demand for teachers and space is increasing at a rate greater than teachers and space can be provided.
3. **Problems with Half-Day Programs and Transportation.** When prekindergarten programs are offered for a half-day, in a

community of working parents, the programs often do not obtain high enrollment or a positive response. Similarly, there is lower interest and participation in programs offered in rural areas that do not provide transportation. To be effective, the programs need to truly consider the particular needs of the community.

4. **Lack of Support by the Governor and State Senate.** Just as the Speaker and Assembly were political facilitators in the promotion and adoption of the program, the Governor's and the Senate's lack of interest in the program hinders its acceptance and funding and continues to place the program in jeopardy of losing funding.
5. **Concern about Future Funding.** This barrier was related to both lack of political support from the Governor and Senate and the nature of the economy. While the economy is strong, there is "soft money" available, and new programs such as Universal Prekindergarten get funded. If the economy enters a recession, 'add-on' programs will be the first reviewed.

New York Summary

In summation, several points are worth highlighting. First, the perceived success of the long-established Experimental Prekindergarten program laid a stable groundwork for the universal program. In addition, the committed support of several key political leaders is noteworthy, although not unique to New York State. What is unique about the New York case is its approach to implementation of the program. Both the five year phase-in implementation and the mandated collaboration are unique aspects of New York's prekindergarten policy and appear to be responsible for much of the policy's practical, or field success.

The 'phase in' approach has reduced pressure on school districts to participate immediately. It has also reduced pressure on the state system and higher education to provide resources for a fully operational universal program. Another important factor, the acceptance of the UPK, was the decision to establish local advisory committees. These local advisory committees provide guidance pertinent to their district. This is a proactive strategy that involves the community in the development and implementation of policy. Giving ownership to the community reduced the sense of state imposition and helped foster local acceptability of the program.

New York's prekindergarten program is not without its struggles, however. The ongoing resistance of the governor and legislators to adequately fund the program, in addition to the often late state budget approval, have proved hindrances to the acceptance of the program into New York's educational identity. Other factors, such as the transportation policy, also prove troublesome and require continued attention and fine tuning of prekindergarten policy.

The future of New York's prekindergarten program depends upon continued commitment and funding from legislative leaders, and to an extent, general economic health. It is important to use this time of relative support and economic well-being to make the program part of the state's educational identity. Only then can the program be assured.

SOUTH CAROLINA

How It Began

In 1984 Governor Richard Riley, made a statewide commitment to educational reform. He crafted the Educational Improvement Act (EIA) and assisted in its passage by the legislature. This was accomplished by raising the state sales tax by one-cent to pay for the reform elements, an unpopular but necessary step to achieve these reforms. There were three major pieces in this legislation:

- An increase in teachers' salaries
- A statewide compensatory remedial initiative (every child who scored below the standard on the state basic skills test gets remediation)
- An early intervention initiative to keep children from falling behind.

The prekindergarten program provided money for school districts, but in the beginning all school districts were not required to have programs. The program was in effect for about ten years before the state required all districts to implement the program. Program funds were distributed based on the percentage of students scoring 'not ready' on the first grade readiness test.

During Riley's term in office, the program grew and developed. During the twelve years between the terms of Governors Richard Riley and Jim Hodges (1986–1998), the early childhood program continued with only a small increase in funding each year and the passage of the law requiring all districts to participate.

One of Jim Hodges first acts was to ensure the passage of **First Steps.** This was a major new early childhood initiative and although it is fiscally small at the present time, it is expected to grow and provide many services to children from birth to kindergarten age. Because this additional program was approved, the state again demonstrated its commitment to early childhood programs.

Current Status

Every South Carolina school district is required to have at least one prekindergarten classroom. This program serves the at-risk (children with potential academic deficiencies or children for whom English is a second language) population of the state. In the 1999-2000 school year the program enrolled about 15,400 students, which represents about 30% of the four-year-olds in the state. It appropriated $23.6 million for the prekindergarten program in 1999–2000 with the participating localities spending additional funds. This supplementary amount varies from almost nothing to thousands of extra dollars.

In South Carolina the prekindergarten program operates 180 days and is primarily conducted by the public schools. The program requires two and a half-hours per day, five days per week. Half-day programs are not practical in some localities for such reasons as transportation, working parents, and the school day arrangement. Districts often provide a full-day program using an assortment of added funding sources such as Title 1, Head Start and various local funds. The curriculum is determined according to locally defined needs and requirements.

The Office of Early Childhood in the Department of Education of South Carolina administers the program. The money is awarded to a school district, which may then subcontract with an outside agency (e.g., day care center) to provide prekindergarten services. Only certified teachers may teach in the program regardless of what setting is being used.

Analytic Findings

Figures 4a and 4b show the percentage of responses from the interviewers that were found in each of the categories of the coding system.

Facilitators

The largest percentage of facilitator responses fell in the **individual** category. This reflects the impor-

tant role played by significant persons in both the professional and political worlds, both in getting this prekindergarten program started and keeping it growing. South Carolina was the only state in which the individual category had the highest percentage of responses as facilitators. Governor Dick Riley was given major credit for the development of the initiative and lobbying for this program of reform through the passage of the Education Improvement Act.

> *... and lobbied the legislature and called in supportive people to work on them.*
>
> –South Carolina interviewee

A number of other significant individuals played a role as well. The current Superintendent of Education, Inez Tenenbaum, is seen as a strong supporter who provided some of the **institutional** facilitators by establishing an Office of Early Childhood Education and staffing it. Two other institutional moves were to establish an Interagency Child Development Committee and to create a flexible policy for local districts, which enabled them to combine funds from private and public sources thus making a full-day prekindergarten program possible.

Along with the groups that played the role of facilitators there were meaningful institutional changes that have created a better structure for the prekindergarten program. For example,

> *With him (Gov. Hodges) came Ms. Tenenbaum as State Superintendent of Education. Early childhood education has been one of her top priorities. This is the first time we've had an Office of Early Childhood within the state Department of Education.*
>
> –South Carolina interviewee

There has been a general recognition of the need for collaboration and for that to work effectively there have to be institutional efforts to carry it off.

> *We've created child development centers and now with our emphasis on parenting and family literacy-we have parent resource centers and family literacy classrooms in there.*
>
> –South Carolina interviewee

The prime **economic** facilitator was the increase of the sales tax by one-cent to implement the Educational Improvement Act. Since tax increases are never a popular action, the support of a tax increase was a measure of the degree of the Governor's commitment.

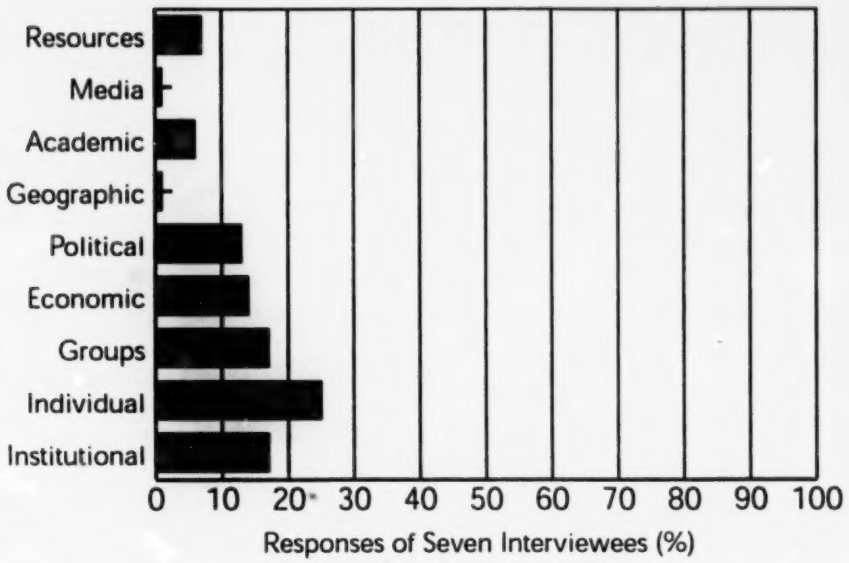
> *He put in a 10% pay increase for teachers so the teachers, the Education Association and the school district people and the school boards people, they were up front going in there turning the world upside down to get that legislation passed.*
>
> –South Carolina interviewee

The fact that **groups** were also seen as major facilitators was also due, in some measure, to the work of Governor Riley who called the various interest groups together.

> *He said, you can squabble internally about this and not get it, or we can decide this is the time when our state is ready to vote some big bucks for education, let it go to education and then work out our partnerships after that.*
>
> –South Carolina interviewee

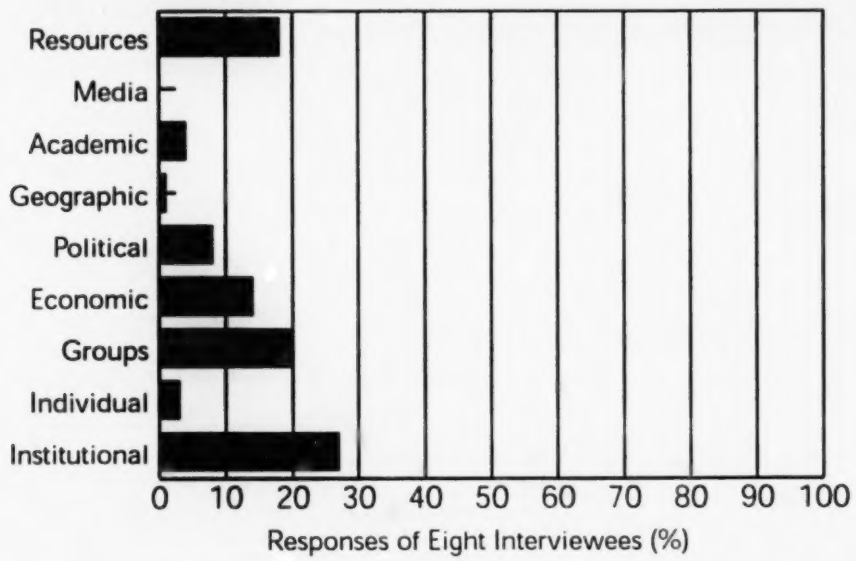
The **political** category, which in this case blends with the **individual** category, is obviously important at the beginning of the program and in driving the current initiative. Additional political highlights include the mandate that all school districts participate.

Figure 4a. South Carolina Facilitators



Total Items Cited	
Resources	9
Media	2
Academic	8
Geographic	1
Political	18
Economic	19
Groups	23
Individual	34
Institutional	23
Total	**137**

Figure 4b. South Carolina Barriers



Total Items Cited	
Resources	18
Media	0
Academic	4
Geographic	1
Political	8
Economic	14
Groups	20
Individual	3
Institutional	27
Total	**95**

Eight or 10 years ago the legislation changed to require all school districts to have a program for four-year-olds. It didn't say that you had to serve all four-year-olds, it just said that every district had to have a program for four-year-olds.

–South Carolina interviewee

As interesting as the variety of facilitators that were used in South Carolina were those categories that were **not** major factors. The **media** played a very small role according to the interviewees and **geographic** factor did not seem to be relevant.

Academic arguments or factors seemed to play a minor role, quantitatively. The low percentage of **resource** responses was a reflection of the limited resources in the state.

Barriers

The largest category in the barriers from a percentage standpoint was **institutional** as can be seen in Figure 4b. This reflected the absence of an infrastructure that could provide support for the prekindergarten program. There was a shortage of trained personnel, data systems, and communication.

It's not an issue that receives a fraction of the attention that it deserves, and so the question of training early childhood people is one of those things that should have gotten a lot more attention in the past... there wasn't any attention paid to early childhood development, training early childhood teachers.

–South Carolina interviewee

The **economic** barriers also are noteworthy. Despite the major effort to increase resources for education interviewees perceived that this is a poor and conservative state and it will take a good deal to expand or pay for the needed resources for the prekindergarten program.

The budget will play a major role. We don't know where the money's going to come from.

–South Carolina interviewee

We're a very conservative state. People don't like to be taxed. They don't like to be taxed for somebody else's children. We have a fairly high percentage of the people in this state who attend private schools. Certainly a lot of the 'money people' go to private schools; I guess that's true everywhere. They also tend to be the decision-makers.

–South Carolina interviewee

The area of **resources** was one of the major barriers noted, with lack of space, trained personnel, and the absence of transportation placing a major brake on the program. The needs for additional resources are likely to continue to delay full implementation.

If the state came to us tomorrow and said you could serve all four-year-olds, we couldn't due to limited space.

–South Carolina interviewee

The high percentage of barrier statements attributed to the **groups** reflected the early concerns of the other stakeholders in child care and also the opposition by the conservative forces in South Carolina.

But these were groups of parents who were, for some time, fearful that the state would, as they put it, take over the responsibility of parents.

–South Carolina interviewee

The **political** barriers indicated not so much active opposition as neglect of the early childhood programs during a twelve-year period when the opposition party was in of the Governor's mansion. Neither **media** nor **geographical** considerations or **academic** arguments played a major role in the barriers to this early childhood program. No **indi-**

vidual stood out as a significant barrier to the program. As in the other states, the barriers were more economic and institutional (reflecting the absence of a support infrastructure for prekindergarten) than the result of active opposition to these early childhood programs.

Major Facilitators

1. **Governor Riley's Educational Reform Initiative.** There was no doubt among the interviewees that Governor Riley was the key person and force in South Carolina to bring about this reform program with an emphasis on being raises in teachers' salaries.
2. **Low Student Performance.** When quantitative data became available documenting the low performance of South Carolina students in the early grades, this became a great motivator to do something in the preschool.
3. **Minority Group Support.** Minority groups provided political support for this prekindergarten program on a consistent basis. They saw benefits accruing to their children. Although not powerful enough to carry the argument by themselves, they were a visible source of support during the discussions about the reform movement.
4. **Governor Hodges and First Steps.** Governor Hodges pushed for a new initiative in state government (First Steps) that would provide resources to the local communities to provide support for children from birth to five. This again exhibited the state's commitment to early childhood education.
5. **New Administrative Unit.** Superintendent of Schools Tenenbaum has provided powerful support to the prekindergarten initiative with the establishment of a new Office of Early Childhood Education. The office in South Carolina is operated within the Department of Education.

Major Barriers

1. **Consistent Political Opposition.** The prekindergarten program appears to be politically polarized. Governor Riley, a Democrat, proposed the program and when Republican governors succeeded him, they did not provide any significant financial increases for the program. It was not until another Democratic Governor was elected that the prekindergarten program was revived.
2. **Opposition of the Conservative Right.** There were moral issues raised by conservative voices who carry considerable weight in South Carolina, as to whether such early childhood programs were undermining the family, encouraging women to work outside the home, and so on. While not strong enough to cancel the program itself, this political group did seem to delay full implementation of the program.
3. **Financial Costs.** South Carolina is not one of the wealthier states and so undertaking this program was done with significant costs and political risks. The inability to fully fund the program from the state level was a deterrent to many local communities that correctly saw that they would have to put additional funds into the program if it were to work at the local level.
4. **Lack of Resources.** Another drawback to the program was the lack of trained personnel and available space. A major effort to prepare personnel is now underway but is still a long way from reaching the goal.
5. **Uncertainty of Stakeholders.** A number of educational and early childhood specialists were concerned about how the prekindergarten program would affect them and this acted as a brake on the program itself.

South Carolina Summary

There was wide general agreement that the key facilitator for the prekindergarten program in South Carolina was an individual, Governor Richard Riley. As was true in other states, the rationale was to counteract low student performance in the early grades. He pushed this program as part of an educational reform package that included increases in teachers' salaries. He dealt with the economic barrier by championing a one-cent increase in the sales tax. He was also able to bring together groups concerned with early childhood in support of the program as well as strong minority group support.

Superintendent Tenenbaum used the institutional strategy of establishing a new administrative unit, the Office of Early Childhood Education, although it remained in the Department of Education. There was considerable opposition to the program from the opposing political party and by conservative forces in the state that certainly slowed the development of the program over the years. Governor Hodges began his own administration with a new initiative, First Steps, to provide resources to local communities to provide support for children from birth to five. Although this program does not affect the prekindergarten program directly, the renewed interest in young children in South Carolina seemed to reenergize the program for four-year-olds.

The future seems to be one of gradual growth of the program, as financial resources become available, as long as there is general public support.

TEXAS

How It Began

In the early 1980s Ross Perot was appointed by then Governor Mark White to head a citizens commission to look at early childhood education. One recommendation of this group was to establish a prekindergarten program in Texas. The adoption of the prekindergarten program was an act of political will on the part of the legislation but it was also passed because Ross Perot had a strong voice and supported preschool education.

The reforms generated by the 68th Texas Legislature in 1983 came about because of the emerging recognition of the importance of early childhood education for certain high-risk students. The summer of 1984 brought a special session and House Bill 72. At that time, the Legislature felt drastic steps were necessary to curb costly remediation and school failure in later grades. The intent of the legislature was to break the debilitating effects of school failure by building a solid foundation of school success among high-risk four-year-olds. The law stipulated that any school district **may** offer prekindergarten classes, but a school district that has at least 15 eligible (children unable to speak or understand English, educationally disadvantaged or homeless) four-year-olds **must** offer a prekindergarten program. The law for prekindergarten education, enacted in

May 1985, became effective with the 1985–86 school year.

In the late 1990s Governor George Bush started the campaign "every child reading on grade level by 3rd grade." It has had a tremendous impact on education policy, but especially on the prekindergarten program.

Current Status

The Texas prekindergarten program serves the at-risk (children unable to speak or understand English, educationally disadvantaged or homeless) population of the state. It currently (1999–2000 school year) enrolls about 142,000 students, which represents about 22% of the four-year-olds in the state. Texas appropriated $171.9 million for this program during the school year 1999–2000.

In order to get more children "ready," an additional $200 million was added in the spring of 1999 to be utilized during the school years 1999–2000 and 2000–2001. This was approved by the legislature and supported by Governor Bush. Currently Texas only funds half-day prekindergarten programs and this money is intended for the expansion of prekindergarten and kindergarten programs to full-day. Districts are allocated funds using the Texas Education Code.

The prekindergarten programs in Texas may serve either three- and four-year-olds or just fours. A district is not required to provide transportation for prekindergarten classes, but transportation, if provided, is included as part of the regular transportation system. The program requires attendance for 3 hours per day, 5 days per week.

Curriculum guidelines have been developed, but their use is optional. Every class has a certified teacher, many of whom also have an endorsement in bilingual education or as an English as a second language (ESL) teacher. Because prekindergarten was removed from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (means developed by Texas Education Agency for determining accountability) requirement, there is neither a state-approved teacher/child ratio nor a class-size cap.

The Texas Education Agency administers the prekindergarten program and local school districts receive the money. They may provide services directly or subcontract with community agencies.

Analytic Findings

The coding of the facilitators by the reviewers is indicated in Figure 5a and 5b. The percentages of coded responses in the charts were obtained from the aggregate coding of the Texas interviewees.

Facilitators

Figure 5a displays the categories of institutional, academic, economic and groups as the highest. The support of Governor Mark White provided some of the **institutional** support as he appointed Ross Perot to look at public schools in Texas with the goal of determining what reforms were needed.

> *There were lots of people who talked about how important early childhood education was. That we spend so much money on prisons and that we should be spending as much money, if not more, on preventing children from dropping out, and the way to do that was to start early.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

Institutional support is also demonstrated when subcontracting takes place. It was often expressed that multiple standards led to improved programming.

> *We don't go with just one set of standards; you must follow the most stringent ones. For instance, if you collaborate with Head Start, you will still need a certified teacher because that is our requirement. The Head Start class size is lower so that is used. So it's the best of both worlds.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

The requirement to offer a program if the district identifies 15 or more eligible children was also recorded as an institutional facilitator.

The high scores for the **academic** and **group** categories reflect the drive for increased educational skills and the broad range of support that was given to this program because it is designed to improve the educational opportunities of 'at-risk' children.

> *Drastic steps were needed to curb costly remediation and school failure in later grades.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

> *Texas began to look at itself and say, why aren't we achieving? Why are we ranked so low? What are we doing wrong in our public schools?*
>
> –Texas interviewee

Prekindergarten education was seen as one way to help alleviate this concern. The requirements that teachers must not only be certified but also have an endorsement in early childhood or kindergarten education is also seen as an **academic** facilitator. This move received a great deal of support from various **groups** including ethnic groups as well as early childhood cohorts.

> *We had a very strong cadre of professionals in the Texas AEYC and in early childhood higher education programs, and they worked very closely with our Texas Education Agency.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

Economic support has also been abundant. Texas has a strong economy and this program has now been included in the on-going education budget, securing it's future.

> *These children are funded just like we fund kindergarten through 12th grade students.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

The 1999 Legislature appropriated an additional $200 million, to be utilized during the 1999–2001 school years for the expansion of half-day programs to full-day.

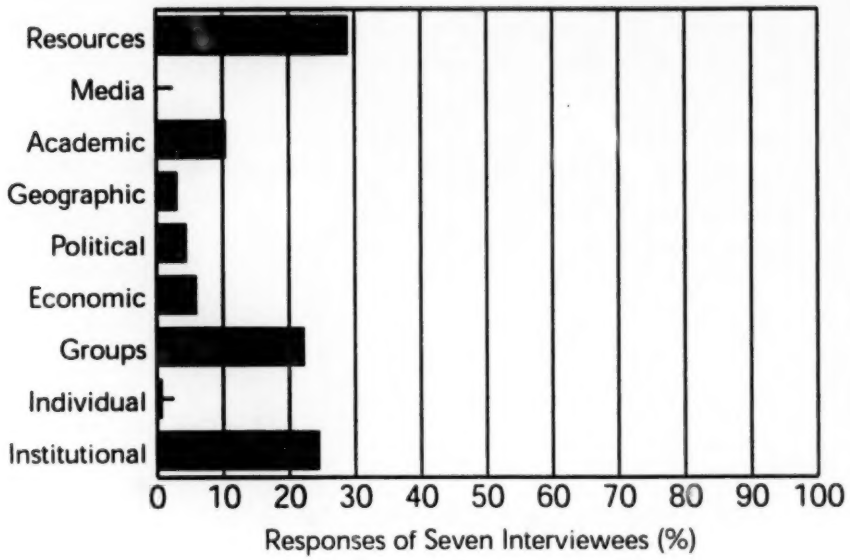
One leader who stands out as an **individual** is Ross Perot. He headed the commission that looked at education in Texas. One recommendation that they suggested was the formation of a prekindergarten program for limited English proficient children and children living in poverty. Dr. William Kirby was the Commissioner of Education when the legislation for prekindergarten education was first passed and was very supportive and influential.

> *Dr. Kirby, the Commissioner at the time, was very pro early childhood. In fact, many people don't know this, but he has his doctorate in reading and in early childhood education. So even though he was a very busy man with this massive school reform, part of that reform was the prekindergarten program, and he made sure it was included.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

As with other states, we can identify key **political** leaders and strategies. Former Governor Mark White appointed Ross Perot to head the citizens' commission that looked at education in Texas. House Bill 72 was passed and contained 11 items that were related to early childhood, including the prekindergarten program. Governor George Bush's emphasis on reading on grade level by the third grade also influenced the passage of the additional $200 million to be used during the two school years 1999–2000 and 2000–2001.

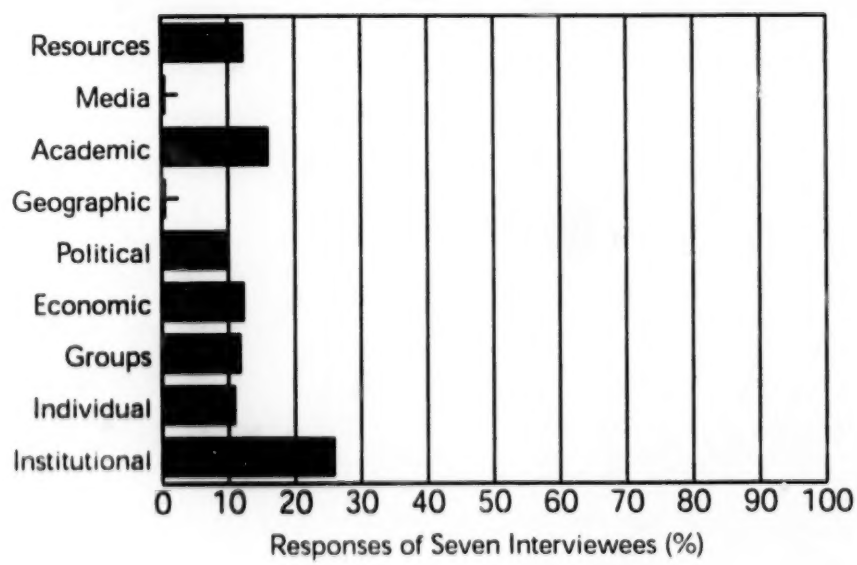
Also noteworthy is that the media and the geographic areas played almost no role in this program. The prekindergarten program was developed largely by the state government and legislature without much consideration of **geographic** areas or input from the **media.** This appeared to have been a political movement supported by many but it did receive some opposition as is demonstrated in the barriers.

Figure 5a. Texas Facilitators



Total Items Cited	
Resources	41
Media	0
Academic	14
Geographic	4
Political	6
Economic	9
Groups	34
Individual	1
Institutional	39
Total	**148**

Figure 5b. Texas Barriers



Total Items Cited	
Resources	26
Media	1
Academic	34
Geographic	1
Political	21
Economic	29
Groups	29
Individual	23
Institutional	64
Total	**228**

Barriers

The barrier statements that are summarized in Figure 5b represent the responses of the people interviewed in Texas. The high percentage of responses in the **resource** category reflects the major difficulties in finding qualified teachers and space.

> *We need so many teachers; the problem of providing teachers is unbelievable in this state.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

> *In addition to an early childhood certification they need a bilingual endorsement if they are teaching a bilingual class, and a bilingual or ESL endorsement if they are teaching an ESL class. Those teachers are especially hard to find.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

> *School buildings are also often not child friendly because of a lack of classroom facilities such as water fountains, bathrooms and low shelving, etc.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

The high score in the **group** category reflects that there was some initial resistance to the prekindergarten program by child care providers and some Head Starts who were anxious to learn if their enrollment might be negatively impacted.

> *There were lots of folks in the private sector who'd been running day care programs and people in the Head Start community who were concerned about what the public schools were going to do to pre-K (prekindergarten) kids.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

The religious right felt that children should be home with their mothers, and there were also concerns that a program run by the schools would be too "academic" and not developmentally appropriate.

> *...some of these groups are going to have a hard time accepting that there are many children who need out-of-home care.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

Institutional barriers can also be seen in the fact that these prekindergarten programs are not part of the new Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills regulations. Because of this, the state can only issue guidelines but not requirements for programs. This has often led to large class sizes and inappropriate curricula.

> *In 1995, as a result of the passage of Senate Bill I, the State Boards of Education no longer has rulemaking authority for provisions for prekindergarten programs. One of the implications of the removal of these provisions was the State Board no longer had the authority to make rules regarding class size for prekindergarten programs.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

Texas also has 20 Regional Education Service Centers around the state but had few staff prepared to aid the prekindergarten programs with the exception of special education personnel. This has led to a lack of guidance and accountability.

> *Many Regional Educational Service Centers do not have an early childhood person on staff.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

Academic barriers reflect the increased emphasis on standards, accountability and reading.

> *My concern is that we not get so focused on standards, accountability, TAAS test and reading that we forget that there's a whole child there.*
>
> –Texas interviewee

Because there is no required curriculum, there is a trickle down effect especially from the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) scores, which are published each year.

Every grade is putting pressure on the grade beneath them to have the children ready to take that TAAS test.

–Texas interviewee

The categories reflecting **media, individuals** and **geographic** forces were not considered as strong barriers in the establishment of the prekindergarten program in Texas.

Major Facilitators

1. **Concerns about School Failures.** Interviewees showed a great deal of concern about the increasing numbers of early school failures, and that this represented a major interest in the education field. The prekindergarten program was seen as one way to help alleviate this concern.
2. **Perot's Commission on Educational Reform.** As a result of concern and wide-ranging interest, in the early 1980s Governor Mark White appointed Ross Perot to head a citizen's commission to look at education in Texas. Several reform initiatives were adopted as a result of this commission. Included was a program for educationally disadvantaged, homeless and non-English speaking four-year-olds.
3. **Strong Economic Times.** Texas was enjoying a period of strong economic growth that allowed it to offer reliable fiscal support to a prekindergarten program.
4. **Leadership of Commissioner of Education William Kirby and Legislators.** Commissioner Kirby and key legislators pushed for new initiatives to enhance the learning opportunities of educationally disadvantaged, homeless or non-English speaking prekindergarten children.
5. **Current Interest in Reading.** The initiative by George Bush, that all children be reading on grade level by third grade, brought new money and interest to the prekindergarten program by the 1999 Legislature.

Major Barriers

1. **Lack of Facilities and Personnel.** There continues to be a crucial lack of facilities and personnel, but particularly of bilingual and ESL teachers. Because Texas has such a large population of minority students, having enough bilingual and ESL trained teachers is a big problem for the prekindergarten program. A major effort to prepare personnel is now underway but is still a long way from reaching the goal.
2. **Lack of Administrative Support.** There has not been a lot of emphasis or support at the administrative level for early childhood education. Reading has received more assistance and provisions. To wit: Texas has a one-person Department of Early Childhood Education, despite the fact that it has one of the largest early childhood populations.
3. **Opposition of Conservative Groups.** Various conservative groups who carry considerable weight in Texas raised moral issues. They questioned whether such early childhood programs were encouraging women to work outside the home and thereby undermining the family. Although not strong, their influence has been felt.
4. **Lack of Early Childhood Specialists in Service Centers.** Omitted emphasis and support for early childhood education at the administrative level is also demonstrated by not placing an early childhood specialist in each of the 20 Regional Education Service Centers which are a part of the Texas Educational Agency.

5. **Prekindergarten is no Longer a Part of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.** At one time prekindergarten was included in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills but with the latest revision (1999), it is no longer included. The biggest barrier created by this is the lack of mandated staff-child ratios and class size as well as the lack of a required curriculum. This has resulted in some classes being extremely large (and often having only one staff member) as well as some inappropriate expectations.
6. **Lack of Collaboration between Various Units of Higher Education.** Classes at community colleges often do not transfer to four-year institutions. Many early childhood professionals do not agree about how to resolve this issue.

Texas Summary

The prekindergarten program in Texas was established because large numbers of children were failing in the early grades. The fact that school failure was seen by the legislature as an argument for prekindergarten programs also helped get the program funded. Governor White appointed Ross Perot to head a citizen's commission to look at education in Texas. Among other things, the commission concluded that a prekindergarten program was needed. This program was included in a larger educational reform package making it easier to fund as well as making it not as noticeable to the general public. More recently, Texas has set reading at grade level by third grade as a goal. The prekindergarten program is seen as a way to help achieve this goal.

Because the prekindergarten program has now been included as part of the continuing education budget, the program is more stable and should continue as long as the economy is strong. This method of funding makes the program very difficult to discontinue should an opposition to the program emerge in Texas.

Discussion

THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS OF KEY PERSONS IN FIVE STATES about the development of prekindergarten programs in those states yielded a broad collection of information worthy of discussion. How do the results of these case studies of state policy and the development of prekindergarten programs relate to the Fullan (1993) proposition that both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' are necessary to create educational change? This descriptive study was not designed as a test for Fullan's proposition but we can comment on whether our results are consistent with his and others policy propositions.

It is clear that the 'top-down' element is present. The powerful role of political leaders in the five states is good testimony to that. It depends upon where one defines the **bottom**, however, as to whether the 'bottom-up' approach is there. If one defines 'bottom-up' as influences from the professional level, there is no doubt that early child care professionals, their organizations, and advocacy groups played a significant role in all of these states. In most instances, they were aided by other professionals within state agencies who administered the program. These professionals provided a clear rationale for the utility of the prekindergarten program for the political leaders. They insisted on the need for quality programs and well-trained personnel. If 'bottom-up' means the general public, however, then one cannot define what happened as a strong 'bottom-up' movement.

One can only surmise that the attitude of the general public was one of tacit approval to the new policy, but not one of strong public action. We can infer by the actions of the state legislatures that there was general public acceptance since any strong negative feelings on the part of the general public would surely be reflected by opposition in the legislative halls. The only clear opposition came from the Christian right who felt that the family was being undermined in such efforts.

Another Fullan proposition, "Connection with the wider environment is essential for success," does play out here. It was necessary to mobilize many groups and organizations as part of this reform movement and numerous individuals and groups from many walks of life played key roles in the development and implementation of this policy.

All of the states also experienced the equivalent of Fullan's principle that "Change is a journey, not a blueprint." All sorts of professional and political events occurred that caused the responsible leaders to make modifications and changes in the program and, in particular, the sequence of its development. In South Carolina for example the program rested essentially dormant for a number of years when the political leadership had other priorities to follow. Several of the interviewees in other states felt that their state may be ready for universal prekindergarten but not ready for the price tag that accompanies it. These are dynamic programs that change as the context and environment change.

What occurred in the states was also an example of **episodic change** as defined by Weick & Quinn (1999). The conditions have not been set for **continuous change,** which would mean a structure or infrastructure that welcomed change as a normal part of organizational activity. Weick & Quinn have pointed out that there has to be a serious lack of equilibrium to justify and sustain **episodic change,** such as the numbers of mothers in the workforce, and the problems young children were having in school. These factors caused the states to act to restore some degree of equilibrium.

There was some evidence from the interviewees that organizational inertia, noted by Weick & Quinn, was present in the resistance of some public school systems that refused to accept prekindergarten programs and also resisted collaboration with other community agencies despite the obvious need to discuss issues of space and personnel.

These prekindergarten programs, in the words of Gersick (1991), changed the 'rules of the game' for educators and child care workers. It was not surprising that such changes in procedures and activities met with resistance but that resistance has been gradually receding over time as a new **deep structure** becomes established and new 'rules of the game' (the prekindergarten programs and rules) become the norm.

These states appear to be well on the way to universal prekindergarten services as soon as they find a way to finance the program. The public schools in these states have accepted yet another responsibility and this educational reform movement for young children continues. It seems useful to consider what general findings **across** states can be identified.

GENERALITIES FROM FIVE STATES

These states (Georgia, Illinois, New York, South Carolina, and Texas) are so different demographically from one another that any similarities among them on this prekindergarten policy initiative would seem to be significant and may indicate the discovery of change mechanisms of some power and utility.

Political Leadership

Since the initiation of a new program for prekindergarten requires a considerable expenditure in state resources, it is inevitable that political leadership would have to be involved in some fashion. In two cases, South Carolina and Georgia, the governor spearheaded this effort. In New York the influential Speaker of the Assembly struggled with an unenthusiastic governor to achieve the program. In Texas, a special study commission appointed by the governor and headed by Ross Perot provided the impetus for the program. In Illinois a number of key legislators played an important role and were helped by key advocacy groups. In each instance some powerful political figure(s) led the way for considering this reform element in education. It was unclear what could be done in the absence of such political leadership. Perhaps a groundswell of opinion and demand for action could cause the political leaders to pay attention. That remains to be demonstrated in another state besides those studied here.

Early School Failures

In each state one key reason for initiating the program was that a number of children in that state were identified as failing in the early grades. The prospect of continued poor school performance and possible later dependence on the larger society was a motivating force for creating a policy for prekindergartens. The possibility that such later school problems could be prevented by immediate

action early in the child's development was accepted through widely publicized intervention research and media attention to brain development. This understanding became the motivation for the beginning of the prekindergarten program in each of these states. The model of Head Start provided some encouragement as well. It is interesting to note that the initiation of the prekindergarten policies was stimulated more by political leadership than by mainstream educators.

Although all of these states now appear to be moving towards universality of service for all four-year-olds, the initial public acceptance of the program was dependent on the realization that some students were potentially in early academic trouble, and that the sooner that problem was addressed the better it would be for everyone.

A limited start, focusing on 'at-risk' children, was also a way for the political leaders to ease into the issue financially, since the sudden cost of a universal program for four-year-olds would be a major financial shock for the legislature and the public. Only Georgia, where the governor was successful in advocating for a lottery whose profits were spent on education, was able to make a sudden and dramatic move from a small program for 'at-risk' children to universal schooling for all four-year-olds whose parents wanted it.

Reform Packages

One of the political strategies used in each state was for the prekindergarten program to be embedded in a larger package of educational reform. In Georgia it was tied to technology and HOPE scholarships for college students; in New York it was also a part of a larger education reform effort, LADDER . Illinois and Texas also made the prekindergarten program a part of a larger comprehensive educational reform package.

In South Carolina it was paired with raises in teachers salaries. The new South Carolina governor initiated the First Steps program, which featured child care from birth to five. While one might suspect that First Steps and the South Carolina prekindergarten program would be in competition for scarce resources, this does not appear to be the case. Instead, the renewed interest in the young child appears to be benefiting both programs.

Professionals and Political Leaders

One important step was the attention paid to the interests of professional child care providers. According to the interviewees, these providers had to be convinced that no harm would come to them or their interests from this prekindergarten program. In each state the interviewees reported initial anxiety on the part of Head Start and child care personnel who wondered if this new program was going to cause them to be competing for the same children.

In each instance, considerable effort was expended to make sure that these groups of child care professionals supported the new policy. In South Carolina the Governor held a meeting of the relevant interest groups to reassure them and to insist that the best way to move forward was by cooperating with one another. In New York a unique strategy was employed mandating that no less than 10% of the funds would be spent on non-school providers. The 10% provision allowed other child care programs to participate with the schools in this program. In actuality, the percentage given to other child care providers was much higher due, in part, to lack of needed resources in the schools. In Illinois, Texas, and Georgia the lack of available space for the new program for prekindergarten made collaboration a necessity as well as good policy and planning. Although there continued to be some grumbling at the local level, the major child care professional leaders in each state appeared to accept the program as positive, or at least, inevitable.

Other Commonalties

The media, according to the interviewees, made an insignificant impact on this decision in all of the states. Aside for a spurt of publicity on brain research and the importance of early stimulation, which was noted by a few interviewees, there was no indication that the media played a major role in the establishment of any of the prekindergarten programs. It is possible that the media stories created a favorable backdrop to the decision making but not in a fashion to impress the interviewees. Nor was there a visible role for higher education input in the decision. Basically, the program strategies seemed to be worked out by the political forces and professional education and child care groups in each state.

The general public represented by the parents and other taxpayers seemed to be moderately positive towards the move. They already appeared to accept the concept that the earlier one intervened in the life of 'at-risk' children, the easier it would be to gain good results. Also, working parents, faced with payment of child care fees, supported the prekindergarten program. There were few instances of general public endorsement or protest, with the exception of those forces from the Christian right who believed that the program undermined family values and that the child was better off with his/her mother than with a teacher or child care worker. These conservative forces provided meaningful opposition in South Carolina and Texas and, to some degree, in Georgia although the Georgia decision to become a universal program was made so rapidly that the opposition did not have a chance to form before the legislation was passed.

MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATES

Finance

There was a major difference in how the states managed to pay for the prekindergarten programs. Georgia, of course, has the lottery funds, which made their financial decisions easier once the lottery was in place. In Texas the program has been in place for so long (since the 1980s) that it has become part of the state's continuing budget and is no longer perceived to be in jeopardy. In Illinois, the program budget has to be considered anew each year. In New York, despite the legislative commitment to universal educational services for four-year-olds, the money for the program is appropriated separately and some believe financial support could be at-risk in an economic downturn. Others in New York feel that the program is well established and would not be seriously impacted short of some economic disaster. South Carolina raised the state sales tax a penny to pay for this and other educational reform programs.

Gradual versus Sudden

There are major differences between Illinois and Texas, each of whom had a gradually developing and expanding program, versus Georgia where the universal program was established in a very short time period. There are advantages in both approaches. On one hand the gradual approach allows states to reach agreements with the various professional groups in the states and to get the general public accustomed to the program. On the other hand, the passage of time allows opposition to coalesce and build their case with the public against the program.

In Georgia, the rapid initiation of a universal program probably took opponents by surprise and disarmed them. This rapid beginning came at a price, however. There remains, in the implementation phase for that state, all of the necessary efforts

at collaboration that were not established before the action was taken. South Carolina started the program as a voluntary one for communities and later switched to a mandatory one and New York has a five-year phase-in period for their 'universal' program. For both South Carolina and New York there was a gradual growth to the program.

Organizational Support Systems

One state, Georgia, felt it necessary to establish a separate Office of School Readiness to administer the four-year-old program apart from the State Department of Education. This office is well funded and well staffed. It was freed from the bureaucratic system that would limit such staffing. The other states maintained an identifiable unit within the State Department of Education to administer the program. By setting up a separate organizational unit apart from the Department of Education, the governor freed the Office of School Readiness from having to compete on the same turf with the many other needs in education.

The states also differed in the amount of support services available from the state level. In Georgia the Office of School Readiness has a large staff that is committed to providing professional and administrative support to local systems including curriculum packages and clear requirements for acceptable practices. In contrast, Texas and New York have close to a one-person early childhood department, which do not commit major resources to technical assistance. Other states like South Carolina allow much more flexibility at the local level on the nature of the program and staffing. Illinois has not made major commitments to technical assistance but has spent resources on personnel preparation.

ADVICE TO OTHER STATES THINKING ABOUT STATE FUNDING AND PROGRAM EXPANSION IN EDUCATION FOR PREKINDERGARTENS

One of the purposes of this study was to find factors that appeared to contribute to the successful change so that other states could more easily proceed through this change process. The following seem to be the major factors in the view of the investigators.

Link with Larger Educational Reform

The five states studied found it useful to embed the four-year-old program in a larger package of educational reform. This appeared to have the effect of diverting criticism or opposition, and also to mute the perception of the costs of this particular program. In some cases the prekindergarten program was linked with raises in teacher salaries. In others it joined hands with increases in technology and other education initiatives. Since the general public seemed bent on 'changing education' this proposed policy received widespread support when combined with the other initiatives noted here.

The Importance of Early Childhood

Most of the states found it advisable to begin the prekindergarten program with vulnerable populations, children judged 'at-risk' for school failure. There was solid evidence from earlier research that well-crafted preschool experiences result in fewer educational failures and referrals to special education, and consequently in major savings to individuals and states. Once the benefits of the program for 'at-risk' children had been noted, it was natural that parents of children not 'at-risk' began wondering why **their** children were not receiving these services. This led naturally to more calls for universal educational services for all prekindergarten aged children.

Political Leadership and Support

Since this prekindergarten program was going to cost a considerable amount of public dollars (though saving money in the long run) it was important that key political leaders come forward with direct support of the program. In the states studied we had several governors, a speaker of the assembly, and prominent political figures who became strong supporters of this effort. It is also wise to make the support bipartisan, if at all possible. South Carolina suffered major delays in the evolution of the early childhood program when the sponsoring political party fell out of power. There are legitimate reasons for both political parties to support a prekindergarten program; such support should be vigorously pursued.

Funding Sources

Once the concept of prekindergarten programs has been accepted as wise public policy there remains the difficult issue of how to pay for this addition to the responsibilities of the state. Unless there is a source of funding available that would not stress other state budget considerations (the Georgia lottery is an example of an additional source of revenue) there is a tendency to introduce the idea and the program gradually. This was true even in New York which accepted the idea of universal prekindergarten but has an extended phase-in provision. The focus on 'at-risk' children as a strategy not only assures public support but also cuts the revenue that would be required to begin a universal prekindergarten program.

Transportation

One of the factors often overlooked in the budget planning has been that of transportation. While the public schools accept responsibility for transportation for school children this factor has been left out of the prekindergarten planning in some instances. The result is that the student allotments to local schools have had to be used to pay for transportation costs to the dismay of local program directors and without additional money from the state. Also, in half-day programs the problem of providing transportation in midday is often troublesome. Many schools have tried to have wraparound services or collaboration with other agencies or programs, such as Title I, so that a full-day program could be carried out and the transportation and working parents' issues could be eased.

Infrastructure-Data Systems

One of the natural steps in policy development and implementation is to assure that the direct services to children are taken care of but to overlook aspects of the support infrastructure that become so important to a quality program (Gallagher & Clifford, 2000). A good example is the lack of a data system to accompany the prekindergarten program. Without such a system it will be impossible to determine how many children are being served, what setting the children are in, where are programs located in the state, how many certified teachers are there, how many others are working towards certification, or where are they getting their certification? Without some such data system, state planners are in the dark when it comes to needed resources and legislators are in the dark about the viability of the requests being made.

Program Quality Assurance

One of the strategies used by a number of states was to take visible steps to ensure that the programs that were going to be supported in the prekindergarten program were of high quality. Establishing standards such as certification of key staff members and developing technical assistance personnel to improve the overall quality of the program were two such strategies. Other states developed curriculum materials that could be used by individual centers. Such moves apparently

resulted in a greater public support and acceptance for the overall program.

Collaboration with Stakeholders

The successful programs all took pains to allay the natural anxieties of child care service providers already in existence in the states. The perception that there will be two or three institutions fighting over who will care for four-year-olds (child care, Head Start, schools, and so on) can bring forth political opposition. All of the states have encouraged various efforts to bring about collaboration between these stakeholders. This was done by providing opportunities and financial support for these stakeholders to participate in the program as long as they met educational standards. A major personnel preparation effort was usually necessary to bring these educators and other professionals up to standard for quality prekindergarten programs.

Other Forces at Work

In addition to these factors there were two other major social movements that added support to these policy changes. The large percentage of mothers in the workforce and the requirements that welfare mothers go to work left parents searching for constructive environments for their young children. The prekindergarten programs fit well into that needed space. Although there were many other factors of influence that were idiosyncratic to individual states, these noted here, if faithfully followed, would seem to be a recipe for successful educational change towards universal prekindergarten programming. ■

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